A comparative study of the drop-out rate of high school pupils in KwaZulu-Natal: A case study of public and private schools.

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DECLARATION

I, Mlungisi Victor Majozi, declare that what is contained in this dissertation provides the results of the work that I have done, and confirms that this thesis has never been submitted previously for academic examination towards any qualification. I further declare that all sources used in this dissertation have been properly acknowledged and accurately reported as indicated in the bibliography.

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ABSTRACT

This study's aim is to assess the factors contributing towards the drop-out rate of pupils in high schools within the uMgungundlovu District (UG). The objectives of the study are to assess if there are existing strategies that can lower the drop-out rates by retaining pupils and thereby improve the through-put rates within the targeted high schools. Literature demonstrates that private schools perform better than public schools in managing their retention strategies and minimising the chances of pupils leaving school. This study is significant since it will provide lessons to be learnt about the challenges and recommendations regarding the drop-out rates in the target schools. The key objective of the study was to examine the factors and encounters that face pupils and teachers in both public and private schooling within the uMgungundlovu District. This study is relevant since it also highlights the difference between private and public schools and the number of pupils who drop-out of both types of schools.

This study employed a mixed-method research approach which is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The target sample for this study was drawn from the population, and it consisted of 180 learners between grades 10 to 12 from each school - 30 pupils per grade will be chosen to participate in the study. Gender balance was taken into consideration when conducting the survey (school A and B) as these respective schools are both mixed gender schools. For this study, two educators per grade were selected, irrespective of the subjects they teach (six educators from school A and six educators from school B) and two members from the school governing body (SGB) namely the chairperson and one member who had served on the committee for more than two years.

The target sample is composed of headmasters from the schools, three officials from the DOE (based on their experience and knowledge of school drop-out rates), and 20 drop-out learners (10 male and 10 female) who had dropped out from both schools. This study revealed that some of the factors attributing to drop-outs are clearly defined in terms of internal attributes such as school capacity, infrastructure, shortage of learning facilities, as well as external factors such as social structures and socialisation of families, political factors, change and transformation of basic education, and an increase in economic costs of education in South Africa. These factors exacerbated the poor performance of learners and teachers and their loss of concentration or passion towards school.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

SMT	School Management Team
HOD	Head of Department
RSA	Republic of South Africa
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
USA	United States of America
DOE	Department of Education
DBE	Department of Basic Education
SGB	School Governing Body
SASA	South African Schools Act
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NYP	National Youth Policy
EU	European Union
NHTS	National Household Travel Survey
GHS	General Household Survey
FS	Free State
GP	Gauteng Province
PMB	Pietermaritzburg
UNICEF	United Nations International Children`s Fund
ECD	Early Child Development
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
TST	Teacher Support Team
HIV	Human Immune Virus
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
LAP	Learner Attendance Policy
NPPMLP	National Policy on Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy
WP	White Paper
PMSVHPS	The Prevention and Management of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Public Schools

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1   CHAPTER ONE

1.1   Introduction and Background to the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the factors that contribute to the drop-out level of pupils and educators in both public and private schooling within the uMgungundlovu District. The important aspect of this study is necessary to highlight the difference between private and public schools and the number of pupils who drop-out of schools in both private and public schools. The study used the combination method which composed of qualitative and quantitative research strategies. The target population of this study consisted of 180 learners between grades 10 to 12 from both school - 30 pupils per grade will be chosen to participate in the study. Gender balance was taken into consideration when conducting the survey as these respective schools are both mixed gender schools.

The study population consists of 90 female pupils and 90 male pupils; consequently, there were 45 males and 45 females participating from each school. The sample for this study was comprised of two educators per grade, they were selected irrespective of the subjects they taught and two members from the SGB, the chairperson and one member who has served on the committee for more than two years. Also forming part of the target population was the headmasters from the schools, three officials from the DOE (based on their experience and knowledge of school drop-out rates), and 20 drop-out learners (10 male and 10 female) who dropped out from both schools were also interviewed. According to the Schools Act s points that all children in South Africa must, "attend school from the first school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of seven years until the last day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of fifteen years or the ninth grade whichever comes first".

1.2 Problem Statement

According to Mnguni (2014.13) states that learner dropout phenomenon appears to be an international catastrophe, particularly in developing countries. South Africa observed the dawn of a democratic government in 1994.Consequently, the government has continuously embarked on a serious discussions and decision to improve the access and quality of education for all levels. Furthermore, the constitution of RSA stipulates that all children have the right to basic education and specifies the period of compulsory schooling which is from grade one to nine (RSA,1996a:29).

The basic education department (2014)

developed the School Management Team (SMT) as constituted in the new educational dispensation that ushered in the Outcome Basic Education System (OBE) is a new structure with the sole function of giving leadership guidance, direction and assistance in the teaching/learning. The study seeks to investigate and understand how the STM contributes in the school and outside the school environment to ensure that cooperation and learner support is conserved. Many studies indicate that rural schools are terribly challenged because it is trite fact that they lack the requisite facilities for education to take place unhindered and optimally. For the SMT to be effective they are expected to be able to improvise by way of creating the much-needed teaching/learning aids/materials that will ensure that the educative activity takes place effectively. According to "Progress Report to the Minister of Education by Ministerial Committee on Learner Retention in the South African Schooling System." 2007. Grade retention is an excellent predictor of who will drop out of high school. Studies spanning several decades suggest that being retained one grade increases the risk of dropping out by 40 to 50 percent. Being retained twice or more almost guarantees the student will drop out. High school students who have been retained, even in earlier years, have the same unhealthful behaviours as retained middle-school students as well as more incidents of driving while using alcohol, marijuana use, suicidal behaviours, and high-risk sexual behaviour. Individuals who have repeated a grade are more likely as adults to be unemployed, live on welfare, or be in prison than adults who did not repeat a grade (Children`shealthforum:2014).

Dekeza-Tsomo (2012. 6) argues that learners are prone to leave school once they reach high school, due to lack of focus and prioritising their educational goals (Dekeza-Tsomo, 2012.06). The government has a responsibility to encourage leaners and educators to be regular in attending school to get the best education that will enable them to have a bright future. Villanueva (2015), asserts that drop-out rates of teenage are caused by the pressure they receive from their peer leaners. To some extent, the evolution of a leaner from childhood to adulthood also exposes leaners to challenges due to their vulnerable to physical and emotional hormonal stimuli. At the same level, leaners are vulnerable to some other experiences like teenage pregnancy (Carstens *et al*., 2008.142). Thus, learner drop-out has a tremendous negative effect within the South African context. Not only is learner drop-out a problem however it originates from variety of social ills which contributes negatively in the society. Bronfenbrenner (2013.244) argues that the macro-level is grounded by, and through, economy, politics, social health, social values, and the nature of the public and relevant situations which influence pupils conclusively defining their prospects. The author supports this argument by referring to a study carried out by Mdlalana (2002) which concludes that managing an overcrowded classroom is strenuous for teachers. More prominently, the study found that congested classrooms have an undesirable influence on the learning development of pupils since classroom organization and inclusion become impossible aspects to create and maintain in such classrooms.

1.3 Research Objectives

The significance of this study is that it is essential to highpoint the transformation between private and public schools and the number of pupils who drop-out of school in both private and public institutions. It is envisioned that this study has further revealed factors and challenges that cause pupils to drop-out from school.

1.3.1 Specific Objectives

To address the main objective above, this study seeks to:

- Examine the use of retention strategies in schools to avoid learners dropping out of school.
- Identify challenges that are confronting the education department in terms of ensuring that learners remain and complete their schooling.
- Recommend strategies and methods to retain pupils and reduce the drop-out rate of learners in schools?

1.3.2 Research Questions

The study seeks to address the following research questions:

- What are the factors contributing to learners dropping out of school?
  Secondary questions are:
- What are the signs displayed by a learner who is contemplating dropping out?
- To what extent are public and private school utilising their strategies to retain pupils and reduce the drop-out rate of learners?
- What are the challenges of the DOE in preventing learner drop-out?
- How can schools and the DOE reduce the drop-out rate and retain pupils?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study may help School Governing Bodies (SGBs), School Management Teams (SMTs) and educators to learn and understand learner dropout phenomenon and to be able to identify learners who are at risk of dropping out. The SGBs and SMTs will be able to use the data collected in this study to develop systems that can reduce and prevent learner dropout in South African secondary schools. Policy makers will benefit from the study by using its findings to develop policies that take into cognisance the context and situation of individuals, schools, and communities with an intent to address the challenges and causes of learner dropout.

The study will benefit researchers, especially those focusing on the causes of the drop out phenomenon as they will use this study to inform further research studies and other educational stake holders who are dealing with

mechanisms and strategies to address learner dropout. Learners at risk of dropping out will ultimately benefit from the study since some schools and educational stakeholders might apply some of the findings and the recommendations made in this study.

1.4   Conceptualisation

1.4.1 School drop-out

According to De Witte (2013. 01), defines Dropout rates as withdrawal of leaners from school earlier than the required period to complete the requirements set by the school and education system to obtain a minimal credential. According to the education department requirement criterion, a minimal qualification for leaners to complete the National Senior Certification (NSC), or "matric" qualification, to be equivalent of completion of all requirements for a grade 12. The rate of dropping out of grades 10 to 11 is 50 % and is the one of the most dropping out just before grade 12. The condition is even more disturbing when NSC graduation rates are considered. In 2013, only 40 % of the pupils who had attended school for 12 years previously made it on matric. This outline that about 60 % of pupils effectively drop out of school, without obtaining the qualifications to their choices. Consequently, critical questions are raised, such as where these school dropouts are going to be employed since they have not obtained a matric certificate (NSC).

1.4.2 Levels of drop-out

Moses *et al.*, (2017. 1) contextualised drop-out according to social meaning that links prod-out with race, inequalities, and poverty. Literature revealed that South Africa drop-outs-rates are more meaningfully when are socially and politically contextualised since South Africa has the history of practicing apartheid that planted seeds on colonial hegemony, apartheid policies, unjust education practices that produced to exclusion. Based on the results of the 2011 General Household Survey, "there are large racial inequalities in matric attainment: only 44% of Black and Coloured youth aged 23-24 had attained matric compared to 83% of Indian youth and 88% of White youth" (Spaull, 2015.35). According to the number of pupils attending school there are also slight provincial differences. Schools that are in rural areas tend to have more pupils who are vulnerable than schools that are in urban areas and rural areas pupils travel long hour to school. These factors have a tremendous influence on drop-out in the country. Furthermore, the Constitution (provides for the leaners 'rights to basic education which is entrenched as a fundamental human right (DoE, 2001.11).

1.5 Preliminary literature review

1.5.1 The context of drop-out rate

Dropout phenomenon in South Africa is not unique and it has now become more prominent in most of the schools in all level bends. The rate of 60 % indicates that drop has reached the level of crisis. Similarly, the sensitive grade is that of grade 12, where only 52 % that is regarded as a vulnerable age level in the population (Department of Basic Education, 2015). The DoE in South Africa supports schools through the implementation of revised regulations that instruct pupils to be retained by schools (between Grades 10-12) and prevent them from leaving schools this phase for longer than four years" (DOE, 2012.16). These new guidelines mean pupils that would have previously been retained more than once are instead automatically moving on to the next grade (except for Grade 12). The newly designed guidelines provide hope to educators since some leaners are not interested in repeating classes, they are afraid that some leaners might laugh at them. The DOE enrolment information depicts as follows:

"The DOE's figures show that 1,100,877 learners were enrolled for Grade 10 in 2014 , however only 610,178 were enrolled for Grade 12 in 2016- showing alarming rate of 44.6 % of learners either dropping out of the system altogether or remaining stuck in Grade 10 and 11. This pattern is indicated across every province in the country, where the drop-out rate reaches as high as 54.4 % in the Northern Cape. The Free State (FS), which took the title of the best performing `province in the Matric exams, saw moorhen half of its learners drop-out between 2014 and 2015, which would make its real 'pass rate far lower than the Western Cape, Gauteng and Mpumalanga."

Table 1: DOE learner enrolment in 2014 by province

Province	Grade 10 (2014)	Grade 12 (2016)	Drop-out rate	Grade 12 pass	Pass rate	'True' pass rate
Northern Cape	22 034	10 041	54.4%	7 902	78.7%	35.9%
North West	67 734	32 045	52.7%	26 448	82.5%	39.0%
Free State	55 293	26 786	51.6%	23 629	88.2%	42.7%
Eastern Cape	154 220	82 902	46.2%	49 768	59.3%	31.9%
Limpopo	189 170	101 807	46.2%	63 595	62.5%	33.6%
KwaZulu Natal	264 816	147 648	44.2%	98 032	66.4%	37.0%
Mpumalanga	94 528	54 251	42.6%	41 801	77.1%	44.2%
Gauteng	174 471	103 829	40.5%	88 381	85.1%	50.7%

Western Cape	75 791	50 869	32.9%	43 716	86.0%	57.7%
South Africa	1 100 877	610 178	44.6%	442 672	72.5%	40.2%

According to the case study of drop-out rates in 2015 by educational researcher, Spaull (2015), supplementary indicates that when a child started school 12 years ago, there were 1.1 million children in grade one. Looking at the 2014 Matriculants, the calculations assert that there were only 550,000 pupils. Spaull sustains that the problem is not prior Matric, however much earlier. If the number were 100 pupils that started school 12 years ago, only 48 of them would have reached Matric, 36 would pass and 14 would qualify to go to university.

Dekeza-Tsomo (2012.14) sustains that classifying the forecasters of high school dropouts is a vital task to understand how procedures of dropping out can help guide the formation of effective methods to preventing the problem. Studies also assert that it is critical to investigate the phenomenon of "early drop-outs" as a possible distinct and unique pathway affecting later adult outcomes. Apart from what has been stated above as the challenges learners face to and from the school, the National Learner Transport Policy (2015) also states that the provision of transport has continued one of the key challenges confronting government in the post-apartheid era. This is largely a result of apartheid practices that ensured that most of the society was placed in areas that were largely inaccessible, and because of the difficulty of the current transport needs resulting from increased economic activity.

The issues pose awfully specific challenges to the transportation of learners to and from schools. The desire of learners to access education is hindered by the long distances they must travel to get to school, threats to their safety and security and the cost of transportation. Pupils have trouble accessing educational facilities due to the inadequacy of learner transport and insufficient schools in the areas where they live. The situation is compounded by the transportation of learners in un-roadworthy vehicles, which results in a high rate of accidents. The implementation and management of learner transport has also taken different forms in various provinces.

1.5.3 Research design and methodology

The nature of study uses a case study design and adopts a mixed methodology. The case study design is an empirical inquiry that is sorted in a bound context (Maree, 2016.81). A case study design is relevant for this study since it does not intend to generalise the results; it aims to provide strategies and causal identification for the Kwa Zulu Natal education department to address the issue of drop-out rates in a positive manner in the Pietermaritzburg district.

1.5.4 Research Methodology

The type of study used is the case study design, and a mixed-research method that is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The research instruments for collecting and analysing data included questionnaires, interviews, and observation. Holcomb and Hickman (2015.02) state that the mixed method comprises qualitative and quantitative data in a single project. It signifies another methodological approach which enables scholars to discover complex phenomena that relates to the nature of the investigation. It also delivers a practical summary of a mixed-methods study and its quest toward guiding the novice researcher in considering a mixed-methods project. Consequently, seeks to identify the factors that contribute to pupil drop-out rates at both schools. Furthermore, the mixed-method design is more authentic in obtaining valid and vast information that emanates from the social and individual behavioural contexts of the population of the study. Terrell (2012.255) stresses that, based on selections made across sizes, mixed methods can offer an investigator many design selections which involves a range of progressive and simultaneous approaches.

1.5.5 Target Population

The study was conducted at the uMgungundlovu district and the Provincial DOE in Pietermaritzburg, where 3 officials formed part of the target population. Subsequently, the researcher interviewed the headmaster of both schools, 20 dropped out learners, and two members of the School Governing Body (SGB) of the respective schools. Hence, both schools comprised of a mixed population of participants. Daniel (2012.05) states that there are several characteristics of a target population that are relevant in determining the sample size, these include: the size of the population, the homogeneity/heterogeneity of the population, and the spatial distribution of the population. This study uses a heterogeneous population of all the diverse racial groups and mixed genders so that it can be proportionally represented.

1.5.6 Sampling Method and Sampling Procedure

The two principals, two educators per grade (Grade 10, 11, and 12), and 180 learners in both schools were selected. The researcher was granted permission to conduct data collection with participants while in their classes. There were 30 learners chosen per grade. The study also focuses on learners who dropped out for the researcher to gain enough information with this phenomenon. There are 20 learners who had dropped out that are interviewed in this regard. Subsequently, the researcher will distribute the questionnaire to three employees who have a clear understanding of dropout's rate (KZN DOE). The sampling method that is used to select learners from grade 10 to 12 and educators is purposive sampling. Snowballing sample is used to select learners

who have dropped out from school. This type of sampling is used because the researcher wants rich information from participants and individuals who can express themselves very well regarding the reasons of learners dropping out of school and also to identify those who meet the sampling criterion of having had the experience of dropping out of school.

Headmasters and educators at the two schools will assist the researcher in ensuring that the selected learners fill the questionnaires in accordingly. Participants in both gender categories are represented.

1.5.7 Data Collection Procedures

Farquhar (2013.05), describes primary data as data that is collected directly from original sources and participants specifically for the research project, using instruments such as interviews, questionnaires, and observations. In collecting primary data, the researcher aims to obtain new insights into the research questions with fresh data by the means of questionnaires and interviews. Govender *et al.* (2014.73) suggest that questionnaires can be used to collect data and further highlight that the use of questionnaires is an accepted practice that is objective in research as questionnaires are standardised and an easy way of collecting data. Furthermore, the researcher will also conduct semi-structured interviews. The secondary data includes data obtained from the previous research. The advantage of referring to the previous work that has been done before is that the most recent research findings related to the topic being studied is obtained.

1.5.8 Interviews and Questionnaire

Coghlan and Miller (2014.01) allude to data analysis by referring to the processes associated with surfacing meaning and understanding from various data sets. The tape recorder was used, and the answers was transcribed; the transcriptions of the answers used thematic coding as a first step. Once coding is completed the researcher was then interpreted the data using theoretical concepts. In the fieldwork, the researcher used responses to the questionnaires which were captured to form the dataset. Thereafter, the researcher was soliciting the facilities of a statistician to analyse the quantitative data collected using a questionnaire.

1.5.9 Validity and reliability

Flynn (2013.37) alludes to reliability and validity and asserts that research is measured by how similar the consequences would be should somebody else conduct a similar study. Validity is the main problem and infers that experiments cannot be controlled perfectly. Through aspects of this research, the opportunity for the results

of the questionnaire to differ will certainly be subject to the respondents. There are numerous influences that may affect the reliability of answers given in the questionnaire; certainly any means of data, for example the interest exposed by the individuals acting as respondents, their submission to provide accurate information, and the relationship towards the researcher, may impact the reliability of the data.

Guest *et al.* (2014.02), state that an account is valid if it signifies exactly the structures of the phenomena that it is proposed to define, explain, or speculate on. Prior the main research, the study has embarked on the pilot phase to ensure that the methodologies employed, instruments used, and data techniques used were appropriate for the study.

1.5.10 Delimitation and limitation

The study was delimited to the area around the Pietermaritzburg, uMgungundlovu district. This is where the researcher will draw the sample of respondents for data collection. This study's limitation is the time factor and the unavailability of financial assistance to conduct research. The researcher has the confirmation of a sponsor available to pay for travelling to and from the research site during data gathering. Data collection depends on the agreed date and availability of the respondents that the researcher communicates prior with the headmaster of the school.

1.5.11 Ethical considerations

This study has considered the following ethical issues:

- **Harm to participants:**

This study does not intend to harm the participants during data collection and report writing. Rubin and Babbie (2016.86) agree that research should never hurt the participants being studied, irrespective of whether they volunteer for the study or not.

The researcher made sure that he avoided the humiliation of participants and that he protected their self-esteem from any harm that might lead to mistrust.

- **Informed consent:**

The researcher informed the contributors about the intention of this study. In addition, the researcher will request permission from participants before conducting interviews. During data collection, the researcher will also be requested permission and access from the DOE.

- **Honesty and truth**

The researcher will make sure that the information provided from the data is correct and truthful**.** Individuals must strive for honesty in all scientific communications. The facts, consequences, approaches, measures, and publication status of the study must not fabricate the facts as stated in the report (USA Department of Health and Human Services, 2015.03).

- **Right to withdraw**

According to Khan (2014.231) states that contributors should be given the opportunity to pull out of the study at any stage, regardless of the possible effects on the results. This must be explained to the participants before beginning the study.

- **Confidentiality and anonymity**

Participation is voluntary and respondents will be informed that all information is treated as confidential. There is no risk in participating in this study. Respondents will also not be constrained to answer any questions they find uncomfortable. Furthermore, Hughes (2001.20) state that information gathered from or about research participants in the course of a study is private and should only be revealed to third parties with the explicit consent of the individuals from whom the information is obtained. Participants must be made aware that their identities will be protected from disclosure.

The researcher tried to protect the confidentiality of the participants from other people in the study and from the public. Participants were assured that the information that they provided would be treated as confidential.

Participants were asked to use code names and the location of the interviews was not divulged. The purpose was to ensure that they were not identifiable in the tape recorder and in print.

1.5.12 Meaning of the research study

This study intended to reveal the factors that contribute negatively to a learner's 'education, hence they later contemplate dropping-out Subsequently, the DOE, school management and parents, will be informed about these causal factors, hence the study will help minimise the number of learners who drop-out from school as this research indicates that some of these factors are very minor.

The findings of this study would contribute by:

- Identifying the big and minor causal factors that lead a learner to contemplate dropping out.
- Informing the DOE of the factors emanate from social-economic, family background and other chemistry that contribute within the schooling context. Most of these factors can be addressed through compliance and continues monitoring.

1.5.13 Structure of the chapters

Chapter One: Introduction

It defines the context and overview. It is comprised of the research methodology, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

It highlights the literature review on the concept of learner drop-out rates and the social factors confronted by the DOE, such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors. Chapter two will further provide previous studies done in drop-out rates.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research methods used, research design, data gathering, and the delimitation of the study.

Chapter Four: Presentation of Findings

The analysis of study results and a conversation of the answers are obtainable in this study.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

The above chapter delivers an account of the answers, draws assumptions, and suggestions references based on the consequences in chapter four, as well as attainments of the research objectives.

2   CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

Theoretical framework and a review of related literature on learner dropout rates and causal factors, challenges, and reasons that causes high dropout rate in schools. The purpose of the study seeks to identify and address the factors that influence most of the learners to contemplate dropouts. It also intends to reveal the relations emanates from these respective factors and the strategies that seek to minimise these dominant factors. The literature in addition, it aims to reveal the reasons and factors that lead pupils to lose focus and passion about school.

According to Dekeza-Tsomo (2012:14) emphasises that discovering the predictors of the dropout phenomenon is a crucial project for the researchers, however, understanding and disseminating the causal factors could actual assist in term developing effective mechanism to deal with this issue of dropout. Further assert that dropout is not just a sudden event, however it is a developing feeling from the affected learner which need to be undertaken exceedingly early. The dropout rate does not necessarily affect the individual person particularly on an early basis of life, but it is a continuous process that deprive the wellbeing of a human being. According to Dekeza-Tsomo (2014: 15), five different theories have been developed to explain the process of dropping out of school. Though each attempt to offer a unique set of affective influences or processes, the interrelationship of certain key variables becomes apparent overall.

2.1.1 Theoretical Approach:

The theoretical approach explores the ways in which the school management (SMT) can provide effective support (Verhoeven, 2009.09). Identification and precisely strategies that seek to minimise the sources of dropout rate particularly in grade 10 to 12. To focus in improving the education system that will enhance the number of learners who achieve in their studies (DOE, 2001.15). The following theories support the notion that a school exists in a system that is constantly affected by various environmental factors.

2.1.2 Academic Mediation Theory

Poor academic achievement, characteristically measured with standardised attainment tests or grade point averages (GPA), has consistently been one of the strongest predictors of drop-out rates, where poor performance is associated with other variables such as anti-social affiliations, personal deviance, family socialisation, and structural strains (Garnier *et al.*, 1997.121). Low academic achievement can also mediate the association between low school bonding and, ultimately, dropping out of school.

According to (2011. 160) contends that there is sufficient evidence that "educational performance, especially during high school, is the single most important influence of whether students drop out or graduate from high school". The South African research on this topic does not confirm this statement. For example, Branson et al. (2013) found only educational performance to be an influence for dropout, but not the most prominent influence. Other South African researchers like Strassburg et al. (2010) and Dieltiens and Many-Gibert (2008) cite aspects of educational performance as influences on school dropout but also not as the most important ones. This could be because primary concerns like poverty are more prevalent in SA and therefore respondents in studies have cited poverty rather than educational performance as an influence. However, even if South African research does not position educational performance as the single most important influence for school dropout it certainly is an important factor, and there are aspects of this subject which affect the likelihood of dropping out in different ways. These aspects include the following: failed subjects, retention/repetition, poor grades, and test scores (marks), and student mobility. I will briefly look at each of these factors as there are various studies regarding different aspects of the influence of these specific areas.

According to the South African ministerial committee on grade retention (DoE, 2008), grade repetition is used to afford an underachieving learner the chance to master the work required of that grade and to acquire the necessary skills. Strongly associated with this view is the belief that a learner who repeats a grade will improve academically and become motivated to work harder. However, there is controversy about the accuracy of this belief and it has been argued that the benefits "are at best short-term and that the long-term effects of grade repetition are harmful on academic achievement and other outcomes" (DoE, 2008. 7).

2.1.3 General Deviance Theory

According to Garnier *et al.* (1997.112), General deviance or specific aspects of deviant behaviour that have direct effects on high school drop-out rates. teenage drug use directly predicts drop-out rates. Teenage Pregnancy is considered as one of the factors that contribute tremendously to dropout rate, although, variations in households were also found as the contributing factor especially if the social economic is unstable.

According to Philip Rudolf (2016:40) a learner's behaviour at school plays an important role in his/her school success. There are some behaviours, namely engagement, deviance, peers, and employment, that have positively illustrated an association with high school success or failure.

Engagement is an important part of the educational process and a significant influence on school dropout. In simple terms, it has been said that learners "have to be present and engaged in order to learn" (Chang & Romero, 2008. 3). Therefore, if a learner is not in class or at school, he/she can obviously not engage with teachers to learn and develop academically.

A South African study by Flisher et al. (2010) specifically investigated the effect of substance use as an influence for school dropout. This longitudinal study examined whether the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs predicts dropout among secondary school learners in Cape Town, SA. The study made use of a self-report instrument and included 1 470 Grade 8 learners of whom 54.9% dropped out of school between the onset of the study and four years later. Another South African study looked at the associations between methamphetamine use and a range of risk behaviours when comparing learners who had not used methamphetamine or cannabis and were not smokers with a group of learners who had done all these things (Pluddemann & Parry, 2012). In the follow-up survey among these 1 561 high school learners in Cape Town, 12 months after the original study, it was found that 43% of the learners were either absent from school or had dropped out (Pluddemann & Parry, 2012). By using an adjusted logistic regression model, it was further found that methamphetamine use in addition to other substances at the time of the first survey was significantly associated with school dropout and absenteeism at the time of the second survey. In fact, those who had used the mentioned substances at the time of the first survey were found to be two and a half times more likely to be absent or had dropped out of school at the time of the second interview. Another South African study by Strassburg et al. (2010) included substance abuse as one of the possible influences for school dropout and this study concluded that substance abuse is one of various reasons for leaving school but specifically among Coloured youth who dropped out after age 15.

Bongani (2014. 50) also found that substance abuse 'caused' school dropout among learners in secondary schools around Johannesburg South, SA. The findings of all four South African studies (Flisher et al., 2010; Bongani, 2014; Pluddemann & Parry, 2012; Strassburg et al., 2010) both confirm and contradict some of the USA findings as discussed earlier. For example, most USA studies (Brook & Balka, 1999; Fergusen & Horwood, 1997) found a small association between dropout and marijuana use whereas the South African studies (Flisher et al., 2010; Bongani, 2014; Pluddemann & Parry, 2012) found a significant association. These differences could have been found because of the factors that they controlled for or the influence of other factors, such as poverty.

2.1.4 Deviant Association Theory

Drop-outs tend to have more different friends who also show potential for dropping out, but the device of the influence of these different peers on the decision to leave school has not been extensively examined (Fagan and Pabon, 1990.215). It is theorised, however, that deviant affiliations have a direct effect on high school drop-out rate over and above the mediating influences of low academic achievement.

The main contributing factor on the deviant association theory is the retention practice that government has established with an intention to increase the quality of education in South Africa. According to the study that was conducted by Gauteng Department of education (GPDE-2014) identifies aspects of the retention

experience that positioned the thoughts of the pupil at risk of dropping out. This includes the fact that "grade retention is perhaps the strongest message that a teacher and a school system can send to a learner that she or he is not... as capable as other children, a failure that is permanent and it cannot be remediated by extra effort. Retention has long-term effects on self-esteem that may supersede even short-term benefits. Regardless of when it occurs, grade retention may increase the chances of dropout, since "it makes a student overage for grade during adolescence, and, for those who are already having difficulty in school, it may increase the likelihood that they will feel frustrated and become disengaged.

Deviant behaviour in and out of school influences learners' ability to devote time and attention to schoolwork and school activities. These divergent behaviours can include delinquent behaviour, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual activity, and teenage pregnancy. There is evidence that involvement in all these behaviours can predict school dropout. Misbehaviour, both at school and outside of school, is one of the deviant behaviours associated with school dropout. Firstly, school misbehaviour is the commonest indicator for deviant behaviour and there is an array of studies which has proved this (Rumberger, 2011). For example, Ou, Mersky, Reynolds, Kohler (2007) found that misbehaviour in elementary school increased the chances of school dropout in high school. There are various ways through which misbehaviour contributes to school dropout, including being suspended or expelled or being sent to alternative schools. In SA, Branson et al. (2013) found that a limited number of males viewed suspension/expulsion as the primary reason for dropping out. That said, it is unlikely that someone will identify their own defiant behaviour as the main reason for their dropping out of school.

2.1.5 Poor Family Socialisation Theory

Families deliver numerous of the principal basics and knowledges for later life, counting academic attainment and accomplishment in school. Initial effects comprise separation, family stress, parental behavioural control, and acceptance. (Ellickson *et al.*, 1998.243). Low parent expectations and educational levels would have direct effects on school dropouts over and above the mediating influence of low academic achievement.

Family background is one of the strongest influences for success in school. For example, a South African study by Masitsa (2006) involved 339 educators in the Free State province to elicit their perception on the influences associated with school dropout among learners in their schools. The influences as cited by respondents were ranked from 1 to 20 and five of the top six influences directly had to do with family concerns, namely the unemployment of parents, lack of parental support, not living with parents, divorce and separation of parents, and family conflict. Although these findings are based on one study, I illustrate in this section that there is good reason to believe that families and specifically parents play a determining role in their 47 children's educational success. Next, I categorise the family influences for school dropout according to Rumberger and Lim's (2008) model which consists of the following: family structure, family resources and family practices. The family structure includes the type and number of individuals in a child's household and these factors can

influence school outcomes. One example of a common type of family structure is single-parent families. For example, in the USA, 44% of households headed by women and having children under 18 years of age were living in poverty in 2009 (Snyder & Dillow, 2012). Further, there are certain family practices, such as supervision and monitoring, that enhance educational performance, and these have also been found to be lower in single parent families, compared to two-parent families (Astone & McLanahan, 1991). Studies (Perreira, Harris & Lee, 2006; Rumberger, 1995) have also specifically found that children living with both their parents have lower dropout rates and higher school completion rates, compared to those living in any other family structure. In SA, Fleisch et al. (2010) analysed the data of the 2007 Community Survey and had similar findings: they established that there was a much higher proportion of non-school going children (7.6%) who lived with relatives (neither parents nor grandparents) as the heads of the household than children who lived with their biological parents as the heads of the household (4%). Further, children who were living with a non-relative as the head of the household were even at greater risk with 10.6% of these children being out of school (Fleisch et al. 2010).

2.1.6 Structural Strain Theory

According to (Rumberger, 1987.163). Studies focusing on demographic factors have indicated that dropouts are more often male than female and are more probable to be from families of low socio-economic status. The intervening hypothesis is that the structural strain factors of gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status will have a direct effect on school drop-out rates over and above the arbitrating influence of low academic attainment. Brown (2004.11) further state, however, that the study of the drop-out phenomenon and its reasons are difficult because, "the same [environmental] factors may influence different pupils in different ways, and even affect the same pupil in different ways at different times". *Janosz et al.* (2000.136) state that while an empirical typology could be useful as a predictive tool with regard to the impact of social risk factors, differential drop-out prevention strategies should be adopted for different personality profiles; for example, those who are quiet, disengaged, low-achievers, and maladjusted. The boys start their schooling later, attend school more haphazardly, recurrence more grades, drop out earlier, have lower completion rate, and achieve lower than girls while in school (Miller 1998.145).

According to Philip Rudolf (2016:44) assert that there are certain background characteristics that influence school dropout. These characteristics can be divided into two main categories: demographics and health. The following demographic characteristics of learners have been found to influence school dropout: gender, race, immigration status and instructional language proficiency. For this study, the influence of gender was of importance. Another interesting finding is the difference in the relationship between gender and dropout when looking at sub-populations. Further explain that when using the entire sample and within a sub-sample of Whites, females had lower dropout rates than males. Subsequently, looking at these factors from another angle

one gets another perspective: I earlier illustrated that repetition is a strong influence for school dropout and South African studies (Fleisch & Shindler, 2009; Strassburg et al., 2010) have proved that boys repeat at a much higher rate than girls. For example, Fleisch and Shindler (2009) found that more than twice as many boys repeated grades than 45 girls.

According to Philip Rudolf (2016:46) emphasises that Immigration status is another demographic characteristic which has been examined in studies on school dropout.Further state that In the USA, foreign-born learners have higher dropout rates than native born learners with Davis and Bauman (2008) determining the dropout rate at 21% among foreign-born compared to 8% among native-born learners. In SA, Flisher et al. (2010:44) found that "more than one in 10 children born outside South Africa" are not in school and that this increases to "more than one-third of children whose place of birth is unknown". Especially in the current South African situation where there are many Africans, especially from Zimbabwe, who have recently moved to SA, more data on this influence are much needed.

2.1.7 Attribution Theory

This theory deals with four major perceived causes of success and failure in achievement situations. Snowman and Beihler (2012) define an attribution as an inference that individuals make about the causes of behaviour. O'Neil (2012) posits that people generate these causes or explanations to make sense of their world. In the same line of thought, matriculants pass rates pupils' attributions can serve as a guide to measure their expectations for future success or failure, thus leading to either retention or school drop-out.

According to Snowman and Bieler, 2012, these attributions can be classified along three dimensions, which are locus of causality, stability, and controllability. Locus of causality or locus of control refers to the origin of causes. The origin may be within or outside the person (O'Neil, 2012). Effort and ability create within the person, so they are internal causes. O' level learners who attribute their success or failure to either of these two causes are said to be internally oriented. Luck and task difficulty originate from outside the person; therefore, they are typical external causes. O' level learners who persist to attribute their success or failure to either of these two causes are said to be externally oriented, hence the cause of school drop-outs can be both internally and externally oriented.

According to O'Neil (2012) suggests that when pupils attribute failure to a lack of ability, they are likely to give up, leading to dropping out of school. Thus, an individual who views failure as being due to a lack of ability will hold less hope for doing better in the future. This is common among pupils from poor upbringings who believe that they are not capable because they are poor, leading to learned helplessness. In this view, pupils who question their own ability pose a serious challenge since their history of failure and feelings of incompetence undercut motivation and learning, foremost to dropping out of school.

2.2   Internal and External Factors Contributing Towards Learner Drop-Out

This section reviews literature on environmental factors that impact on the schooling and contribute towards drop-out rates in pupils. It explains the phenomenon of school drop-out and what schools can do to motivate these learners regarding support.

2.2.1   Internal factors:

2.2.1.1 School factors

According to Gustafsson, (2011; Moses *et al*., 2017), the "pull-out" factors deliberated above interrelates in complex ways with "push-out" factors from within the school system. In South Africa, the greatest obvious reason for "push-out" is the poor quality of foundational, basic, and secondary education available to most people. In most cases, over 75 % of learners in South Africa are from families of low socio-economic status and attend schools which perform poorly and offer a poor-quality education (Spaull, 2015.37). Stressed learners in schools which achieve poorly in the NSC are at a much higher risk of dropping out than struggling learners in schools which perform better (Branson *et al*., 2013.17). According to Dieltiens and Meny-Gibert, (2009.48) state that it has been found that poor quality education after grade nine is a particularly important causal factor in dropouts among senior, secondary school learners. Indeed, "By grade 9, learners in poor (mostly black) schools, have a [learning] backlog of approximately 3.5 years relative to their rich school counterparts" (Moses *et al*., 2017.3).

Gustafsson (2011.42) further states the major factors contributing to the poor quality of education comprise big class sizes, which make teaching problematic, even for good and committed teachers and a lack of resources such as desks, chairs, and textbooks in under-resourced schools. According to the previous research findings constantly indicating that South Africa quality of teaching in deprived schools is very low "teachers lack the basic content knowledge and educational skill to teach the subjects they are teaching" (Spaull, 2015:39).

According to Wills (2015), deprived schools also tend to be large and particularly difficult to manage. School Management Team found it very difficult to manage that particular school, since they have inadequate skills or resources required to run a well-functioning and performing school or create a positive and productive school atmosphere .Subsequently, school setting in which there is bullying, violence, alcohol and substance abuse, and other anti-social behaviours tend to contribute tremendously in the learner disengagement and withdrawal (De Witte *et al*., 2013; Gustafsson, 2011.24-26; Mnguni, 2014). De Witte (*et al*., 2013.13);further states that many schools where the school environment is poor, there is also a deficit in, "school social capital" the presence of caring teachers and others (such as social workers or counsellors) who may offer psycho-social

support to at-risk learners. Even where these exist, the large number and overwhelming nature of psycho-social issues undermines their effectiveness (violence, pregnancy, drugs, and deviance). A troubled learner is more likely to be, "facilitated out", rather than helped in this environment (De Witte et al.2013.17, Dockery N.D.8).

2.2.1.2. Sexual Abuse

Due to many sexual cases reported against learners (PMSVHPS.2018) seeking to address the issue of sexual abuse within the schools. These guidelines seek to create a, "safe, caring and enabling", teaching environment, recognizing that sexual harassment or sexual violence can lead learners to suffer serious emotional consequences, amongst other things, and create a general atmosphere of fear and aggression in the school environment. It has been established that these cases affect the victims immensely, thus most of the victim's dropout school.

2.2.1.3 Teenage pregnancy

The approved policy (NPPMLP,23 February 2018) is seeking to minimise and addresses the high rates of learner pregnancy which affect attendance to school. The great focus of the policy is on prevention, and in the case of unplanned pregnancies, emphasised the need to balance the pregnant learner's needs with those of the rest of the school, which in practice could potentially be interpreted as grounds to prevent a pregnant learner from attending school.

According to Dekeza-Tsomo (2012: 16) point out that the social consequences of teenage pregnancy are dropping out of school, interrupted schooling, falling prey to criminal activity, abortion, ostracism, child neglect, school adjustment difficulties for their children, adoption, lack of social security, poverty, repeated pregnancy and negative effects on domestic life. In South Africa teenage pregnancy is rising each year.

2.2.1.4 Retention

According to Dekeza-Tsomo (2012:22) retention refers to the practice of having a learner repeat a grade level because of low academic performance. Retention is one of the most common factors that put learners at risk of dropping out, because the learner might become an overage learner in that grade. The grade retention in South Africa is higher particularly in grade 8 where learners choose their streams (Science or Commerce). Grade retention is one of the most powerful predictors of dropping out. Learners who are retained are 2-11 times are more likely to drop out during High School than non-retained.

2.2.1.5 Learners' attendance

According to the Policy on Learner Attendance of 2010 aims to promote punctual and regular school attendance and provides standardised measures for recording and monitoring learner attendance. It also ensures that learners and their parents will be treated equitably across provinces. The Policy on Learner Attendance (2010.7) stipulates that it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that the learner attends school daily. The SASA (1996) provides for actions to be taken if a learner who is within the age of compulsory school attendance abstains from school without providing an explanation. Permissible reasons for learner absenteeism are outlined in the Policy on Learner Attendance of 2010.

It also emphasised that if the pupil is not present during the registration period, he/she will be marked as absent. The Policy on Learner Attendance (2010.10) notes that only the information recorded in the class register is used to find data about learner absentee rates. The class teacher and principal are responsible people to use register to monitor learner attendance and to follow up on the non-attendance of learners (The Policy on Learner Attendance 2010, Section 19).

Schools also provide the School Governing Body (SGB) and District Offices with quarterly reports on learner absentee rates. The SGB and District Offices must identify problem areas and determine the appropriate action. The SGB members are also expected to support and promote punctual and regular attendance. They should at least inform the principal if a learner is observed out of school during school hours. If there is reason to believe that the absence may be without valid reason the principal must notify the parent accordingly and request that the learner return to school with an explanation for absence.

If a learner is absent due to an inacceptable reason, normal disciplinary processes will apply because the school code of conduct must state that invalid absenteeism is a disciplinary offence (The Policy on Learner Attendance of 2010, Section 34). Section 35 of the Policy on Learner Attendance of 2010 specifies that it is the duty of the school to have programmes that assist learners who are absent in catching up with schoolwork. This should be reflected in the learner attendance policies of the school. The school policy must indicate how the school will support a learner who has been absent in order to help the learner make up for lost time or assessments that a learner may have missed. According to Section 36 of the Policy on Learner Attendance of 2010, in certain cases (such as chronic illness), absenteeism may be deemed valid, whereas in other cases, the learner may just be skipping school for no reason. A policy on learner attendance at a school should consider both possibilities. The school is responsible for following up on cases of invalid absenteeism and should work together with the parent of the learner to find a solution. The school should also engage with social agencies if circumstances warrant such action. If the learner code of conduct is being breached, disciplinary action must follow.

2.2.1.6. School system

According to Brown (2004.11), many pupils drop out of the secondary level of the school system before completion of their final year, and this is a problem faced in many countries, whether developed, developing, or under-developed. The greater focus on secondary level dropouts is no doubt due to the accepted tenet of educational philosophy, which states that it is important to extend education for as long as possible within the developmental period, from ages 14 to age 18. The more time adolescents must gain educational experience during their teenage years, the better prepared they will be to face life's challenges (Battin-Pearson, 2000.213).

Battin-Pearson (2000: 214) maintains that identifying the predictors of high school dropouts is a crucial task for researchers, because understanding the causes and processes of dropping out can help guide the creation of effective approaches to preventing the problem. They also assert that it is critical to investigate the phenomenon of 'early drop-outs' as a possible distinct and unique pathway affecting later adult outcomes.

According to Brown (2004.11), five different theories have been developed to explain the process of dropping. Through each attempt to offer a unique set of affective influences or processes, the interrelationship of certain key variables becomes apparent overall.

Battin-Pearson (2000.214) maintains that identifying the predictors of high school dropouts is crucial in order to understand the causes and processes needed to address the problem at hand. They also assert that it is critical to investigate the phenomenon of 'early drop-outs' as a possible distinct and unique pathway affecting later adult outcomes.

According to Hammond (*et al.*, 2007.1), there is an agreement in local and international literature on school drop-out rates confirms not only that there, "is no single risk factor that can be used to precisely predict who is at risk of dropping out". However that drop-outs should not be understood as a solitary occasion but rather the result of a long process of disconnection; an increasing, multidimensional process caused by the convergence of a number of factors over time (Branson *et al.*, 2013; De Witte *et al.*, 2013; Dockery, N.D.; Hammond *et al.*, 2007; Sabates *et al.*, 2010). Dockery, (N. D), further assets that over 40 different risk factors relating to drop-out rates have been identified, which makes both identifying the cause of a specific case of a pupil dropping out and tracking such risk factors a very difficult task.

2.3 External Factors

2.3.1 Community/broader factors

Moses (*et al*. (2017) show in detail how the construction of South Africa's economy continues poverty along racial and spatial lines, with black South Africans living in former 'homelands' remaining the poorest, while black and coloured communities living in townships remain similarly marginalised. Spaull (2015), argue along similar lines to that most black and coloured South Africans are trapped in a spatial and structural position in which access to a quality education is nearly unbearable, continuing their poverty and inability to be upwardly mobile.

Tegegne and Molla, (2014). Further state that, in most cases female learners choose to be absent or even to drop out of school because of insufficient sanitary towels during their menstrual cycle. This is a common problem throughout Africa. According to Spaull (2015.37), it, "accounts for 33% of drop-out amongst female learners". Mnguni, (2014.32), further assert that it is in contradiction of government policy to reject pregnant learners from school (ibid.), many schools have sustained to discriminate against those who become pregnant.

2.3.2 Family factors

De Witte (2013:10), assert that families of low socio-economic status, for example those with limited social capital, in socially and geographically marginalised positions, and where key adult members are unemployed and they are certainly struggle the most to keep their children in school, despite the government's provision of child support grants and fee waivers to such families. Located within this broader context, family dynamics also provide several pull-out factors in relation to school drop-out rates. According to Fleisch *et al*. (2009.43-44), "65% of out-of-school children are not receiving social grants". They go on to argue, "These children in all likelihood are eligible for social grants, but their parents, grandparents or heads of household do not have the means to access them." Where families stay at some distance from the nearest school, and cannot afford transport, uniforms, stationary, and other additional costs of schooling, children are at a high risk of dropping out (Branson *et al*., 2013.17; Dieltiens and Meny -Gibert,2009, Sabate et al,2010.12).

According to Moses (*et al*., 2017), continue to state that some families are hindered to access just the state social welfare due to several factors. family displacement due to the legacies of labour migration and apartheid spatial and economic planning Indeed, high family mobility, a phenomenon created by the colonial labour migration system and perpetuated after 1994, has been found to be a key risk factor for school drop-out (Hammond *et al*., 2007.31).

According to Branson (2013.13),assert about the significant of family structure when it comes to staying-in or dropping out of school, children living in a home, "where the head of the household is a parent or grandparent are much more likely to attend school than those living in other types of homes".

According to Richter (2004.26) found, HIV/AIDS has significantly affected children who have been needed not only to care for sick family members, but also to become breadwinners. South Africa is known as a country which has experienced one of the highest rates of HIV/AIDs and Tuberculosis (TB) infections and deaths from these respective diseases in the world. Fleischer (2009.44), further state that orphan-hood is a major risk factor; as found, 32 % of children out of school have one or both parents who are dead (see also Case and Ardington, 2006). Subsequently, children living in child-headed households are also much more vulnerable and are likely to be out of school or drop out of school than counterparts living with close adult relatives (Fleisch *et al*., 2009.44). According to Branson (2013.12), reveal that within the family environment, dynamics such as illness, death, and loss of employment, can contribute tremendously negative in the decision to dropout (Branson 2013.12).

2.3.4 Individual factors

Witte *(*2013.8), for individual learners, most important predictors of school drop-out, "if not the strongest" (De is grade retention and being past the typical age in a grade. Social ills such as poverty (inability to afford basic resources), it has been optional, may have a significant role to play in delayed entry into school and high repetition rates (Dieltiens and Meny-Gibert, 2009.49). South Africa, where delayed school commencement is common and there are high rates of grade retention widely used as a strategy by schools to keep weaker learners from affecting their NSC results (Branson *et al*., 2013.4), this factor is particularly strong.

Fleischer (2009.42), states that there are other reasons for falling behind and not keeping on track, including learners who have learning disabilities or emotional disturbances. Thus far in South Africa, much as reasoning disorders such as foetal alcohol syndrome have been found to cause learning deficits it is often simply the profound and widespread lack of basic foundational numeracy and literacy skills, due to poor participation in early childhood development programmes and the poor quality of early childhood education, subsequent disadvantages children from an early age and ensures they struggle later in their school careers (Spaull, 2015.36). Fleisch (2009.43), physical disability can also present a problem because most schools are not able to meet the special needs of such learners, raising their risk of dropping out. found that, "children with disabilities account for nearly 10 % of the total number of children who are out of school", and that they had a much lower attendance rate than children without disabilities (22.5% were out of school).

According to Hammond (2007), asserts that along with low achievement in class and grade retention, poor attendance or frequent absenteeism is a third important predictor of who is at risk of dropping out. The pattern

of irregular and unbalanced attendance has been called 'stop out' (De Witte *et al*., 2013.2) and can be caused by several issues at family, community, school, or individual levels.

According to Sabates (2010.13), on the concluding factor, it has been found that, "Insights of how education will influence lifestyle and career possibilities/probabilities [and] life chances in the labour market are shown to be factors in both early withdrawal and sustained access in different contexts" With the labour market shrinking in South Africa and young people losing faith that education will result in a good job (Moses *et al*., 2017 .9; Spaull, 2015), many academically able young people are at risk of losing interest and drifting away from school before completing (Dockey,N.D.10).

According to Wallace (2016), others warning signs of disengagement are to be found in misbehaviour, early violence and crime at school factors enhanced by academic struggles, and grade retention or being older than peers. Being part of a high-risk peer group and engaging in high-risk social behaviour, such as taking drugs and alcohol and engaging in early sexual activity, also significantly increases the chance of dropping out (Mnguni, 2014). Teen pregnancy, discussed above, is a result of such high-risk social behaviours among teenagers and contributes greatly to the drop-out rates of girls (Gustafsson, 2011.212; Spaull, 2015.37; Mnguni, 2014).

2.4 The Role of School Management

According to Andrew (2017.16), state that teachers and parents need to be informed that motivation in the home environment and school is an important instrument in encouraging learners to continue with their studies. When learners are motivated, they manage stress better and are also eager to initiate learning activities. Motivated learners tend to be more willing to take risks, to remain involved in a learning task, and are more committed. This means that motivation energises learners to achieve their goals, which can be intrinsically and extrinsically enthused. When learners are motivated at home, they wholly take part in the learning and teaching environment for a better quality of education. Teachers who exhibit a strong sense of professional commitment usually influence their pupils towards higher levels of engagement in their learning process, and more significantly, tend to have much higher classroom on-time attendance rates than teachers who do not display the same professional commitment (Andrew, 2017).

According to Sohnge (2003.282) the disempowered and lack of involvement of parents in their children schoolwork demotivated and unqualified teachers, especially in cases of leaners with poor background. It is argued that the school system is still challenges by regular school absenteeism of leaners, high drop-out rates, high failure rates and lack of employment for school leavers especially matriculants.

Dekeza-Tsomo (2012: 24), Further maintain that School Management Teams (SMT) are school-based, problem-solving groups which function to support learners indirectly through teacher collaboration. The primary function of the SMT is to put in place properly coordinated learner and educator support services that will support the learning and teaching process by identifying and addressing learner, educator, and institutional needs. According to the Education White Paper 6 (2001:6) stipulates the Ministry of Education's commitment to the provision of educational opportunities, in particular for those learners who experience or have experienced barriers to learning and development or who have dropped out of learning because of the inability of the education and training system to accommodate their learning needs. The Education White Paper 6 (2001: 8) stipulates that the development of an inclusive education and training system will consider the incidence and the impact of the spread of the HIV and AIDS pandemic, and other infectious diseases. For planning purposes, the Ministry of Education will ascertain the consequences for the curriculum, the expected enrolment and drop-out rates, and the funding implications for both the short and long term.

2.5 International Experience

According to the (UNICEF, 2012), the number of children dropping out of school is disturbing and it is becoming a cause of concern among educators all the world, mainly in the government of Zimbabwe. Over 190,000 secondary school children and 30 % of primary school pupils drop out of school each year in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe`s resettlement communities have an annual school drop-out of over 300,000 children per year. Drop-outs refer to those pupils that leave school without the school's consent or permission either to attend another school or to stay at home. According to Mawere (2012.12) describes dropouts as, "those pupils who leave school before the final year of the educational cycle in which they are enrolled, which could be primary, ordinary, or advanced level, or even college or university levels". These are therefore pupils who stop to attend school either temporarily or permanently before they complete a given educational cycle, for example, ordinary or advanced levels. According to the study conducted in 2008 in Zimbabwe communal areas shows a decline in the number of pupils registering for the O-level examinations (Chinyoka and Ganga, 2011.145). These figures show that the extent of school dropouts is rampant, hence the need to explore the causes of school dropouts among ordinary level pupils in Zimbabwe.

Numerous factors contribute to poor academic performance and high school drop-out rates among pupils in relocation schools in Zimbabwe. Most Zimbabwean relocation areas have makeshift structures that accommodate schools. According to Mutenga (2012), most satellite schools operate in tobacco barns, disused mine buildings, old chicken runs, and the majority use pole and dagga huts which are not appropriate for learning and human occupancy. These schools were introduced during the fast track relocation programmes of 2000 and up to now very few resettlement schools have developed. According to Chinyoka (2013), states the

augmented cost of living has an opposing impact on the education of pupils. Likely, poverty is associated with the high rates of academic failure or grade retention (Stevens *et al.*, 2012; Chabaya *et al.*, 2009; Brooks-Gunn and Duncan, 2007), and higher incidences of school drop-out (Lacour and Tissington, 2011). Adolescent parenthood is higher among poor teenagers (Chabaya *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore, an increased likelihood of smoking, prostitution, teenage pregnancies, and illegal drug use is associated with school dropouts (Chinyoka, 2013). According to Hlupo and Tsikira (2013), in Zimbabwe girls are sometimes abducted for marriage when they are younger than eight years old.

According to Mwangi (2010) also indicates that a mixture of poverty, disease, and backward cultural practices remain to deny female children their right to education. According to the World Bank Development Report (2012), more than 350 million people, over half of Africa's population, live below the poverty line of one dollar a day. This implies that poverty, to some extent, excludes children from school.

Chinyoka and Naidu (2013), further state that economic recession has caused numerous vulnerable schoolchildren to drop out over the years, though new programmes aim to rectify the situation. The parents fail to raise their children`s school fees due to poverty because they mainly rely on farming, which is continually being affected by lacks satisfactory rainfall. It is against this background that this study is done to explore the causes of school drop-out rates among ordinary level learners at a relocation school in Masvingo.

2.6 Background to Policy Framework

According to Philiph Rudolf (2016:17) The influences on school dropout cannot be thoroughly investigated without a good understanding of the South African educational policies and legislative framework related to this phenomenon. Particularly after 1994, the South African government was determined to ensure that policies and legislation, specifically around education, were constructed to ensure the promotion of the better life which was promised to all population groups. The government's commitment to quality education for all can particularly be seen in the national education budget which has grown to be higher than any other sector. For example, 20% of government expenditure for 2014/15 was allocated to education, amounting to R254 billion (Brand South Africa, 2014). Next, I explore relevant South African policies which particularly relate to the topic under discussion.

2.6.1 The Children's Act 38 of 2005

Maintain the effect to certain rights of children as contained in the Constitution, including education. It states that parental responsibilities include giving due consideration to a child's wishes in any decision that will influence on the child's education, bearing in mind the child's age, maturity, and stage of development (section 31(1) b iv).

2.6.2 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 Since 1996

According to section 3(6)5, a learner who is subject to compulsory attendance and fails to attend school can be inspected, leaving the parents or any other person who is stopping the learner from going to school liable for a fine or imprisonment of up to six months. The legislation relating to education is further elaborated in the South African School's Act, which makes education compulsory from grades one to nine. According to section 5(3)a, no learner may be refused admission to a public school on the grounds that his or her parents are unable to pay the school fees. Language policy can be determined by the governing body of a public school but may not be used as a form of racial discrimination (section 6(2)). Sign Language counts as an official language in this regard (section 6(4)). Section 9 outlines the process for suspension and expulsion, during which the interests of the learner must be safeguarded and, in the case of expulsion, a pupil subject to compulsory attendance must be placed elsewhere in a public school.

 the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996a), Act 108 of 1996, section 29(1) guarantees the right to basic education, including adult basic education and further education which the State must make available and accessible. Section 29(2) of the Act also specifically stipulates that everyone has the right to receive education in the official language of their choice (RSA, 1996a). To promote this the State must consider all educational alternatives, including single-medium institutions. Put simply, the South African Constitution makes it clear that everyone has the right to attend school, and access should never be the reason why a learner drops out of school.

2.6.3. The National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996

 The Minister of Education is accountable for outlining any policy regarding education, and for the general functioning of the education system. This includes policy on education support services, including health, welfare, career and vocational development, counselling and guidance for educational institutions, as well as curriculum frameworks, and learning standards (Act 27 of 1996,section 3(4) L and O).Thus, the DOE is expected to contribute tremendously in ensuring that fresh ideas are developed to minimise the issue of dropouts.

2.6.4. The National Youth Policy (2015-2020)

National Youth Policy (2015-2020) addressing, "high drop-out rates and inadequate skills development", as its second condition analysis and challenge. The poor-quality results in primary school are the cause for weak participation in other school levels. Improving literateness and expertise levels at a primary school level is seen as a key intervention to improving participation overall. As is seeming from the previous outline of important

policy instruments, these legislative documents do not openly reference school dropouts as an area of concern. Though there are general regulations around the provision of education and the wellbeing of children, however that does not comprise specific measures to address youth dropping out of school due to these factors appears to be in the school system. DOE has developed Several pieces of legislation trying to articulate the issue of dropouts through improved school environment and support learners who are at risk of dropping out. The most recent white papers that has been developed by DOE, numbers 5 and 6 (2001), is attempting to address Early Childhood Development (ECD) and Special Needs Education, respectively. The white paper on ECD is based on the premise that government is to help break the cycle of poverty by providing access to ECD programmes, which will help children from birth to nine years old to thrive and to reverse the effects of early deprivation as well as to maximize the development of potential.

2.6.5. The White paper 6 of 2001

The white paper on special needs education aims to address the condition where most of the pupils with disabilities have been excluded from the system due to "the curriculum and education system as a whole have generally failed to respond to the diverse needs of the learner population, resulting in massive numbers of drop-outs, push-outs, and failures." To remedy this, the white paper advocates a single, inclusive education system integrating special needs and support services throughout the system.

2.6.6. The National School Nutrition Programme-2010

It was established new feeding scheme programme that is going to provide food for needy pupils in primary schools (The National School Nutrition programme). The budget for this programme is supplied by national government and distributed through the provincial departments of education. About 9.2 million learners are provided a meal at school and this is done on daily school bases to improve nutrition and encourage school attendance (South African Government Newsroom, 2017). Even though there are some implications in terms of corruption occurring through this programme however, the primary issue of improving nutrition and increasing classroom attendance is gradually addressed (Graham 2015.49).

2.6.7 The National Learner Policy- 2015

Development of the policy was to address the issue of geographic and environment factors that occurred during the apartheid era, where blacks were deprived their rights and freedom in every aspect of life. Subsequently that affected the new generation particularly on the education point of view. The education department is trying so hard to meet the need of the current mode of transport since it is involving many guidelines in terms of special needs and roadworthy.

Walking and waiting time for South African learners, according to the 2013 NHTS results:

• 5,5 million learners across South Africa walked to get their first mode of transport; 93,6 % walked for up to 15 minutes, 5,1 % walked for 16 to 30 minutes, and 0,3 % of learners walked for more than 60 minutes.

• 5,3 million learners waited for their first mode of transport to arrive; 94,7 % waited for up to 15 minutes, 4,5 % waited for 16 to 30 minutes, and 0,8 % of learners waited for more than 30 minutes.

• 5,1 million learners still had to walk a distance at the end of the journey; 94,0 % walked for up to 15 minutes, 4,3 % walked 16 to 30 minutes, and 0,2 % walked for more than 60 minutes.

2.7 Conclusion

According to Brown (2004), clearly define the nature and influence of social and economic factors contributes tremendously in dropout rate not only in South Africa, however, the entire Africa (Chinyoka. 2011). The influence of internal and external factors also has been established as serious cause of dropout, especially with learners who are coming from disadvantage background they are affected greatly compared to learners who come from better background. In SA there are good polices in place however, the challenge is the execution of these policies due to incompetency and many unqualified personnel in the education system. For example, the policy of learner attendance appears as a good initiative from the department of education, however, SMT seem to be failing to comply and monitor the policy in an effective manner that will contribute positively to learners and the entire school system.

Another aspect which really need to be no ignored is the involvement of parents in most of the school activities, thus, that assist in terms addressing dropout in many angles and able to establish the dominant source of these respective factors.

The study shows that more needs to be done particularly on the improvement of school governance and other supporting structures.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The execution method that was used to conduct the whole study. The ethical consideration was respected by ensuring confidentiality or anonymity and trustworthiness of the investigation.

The study was based within a mixed-methods research framework. This process helps the researcher to have insight in to how the school-based structures deal with the school drop-out phenomenon. This was done through the process of filling in questionnaires, the researcher gets insight into what the common reasons that cause learners to contemplate dropping out. The most challenging process is that researcher had to work hard to identify learners who have dropped out. After the hard work the researcher has done in trying to find the learners, the interview also largely challenging since the atmosphere was very tense due to the challenges the dropped-out learners are facing.

3.2. Research Design and Procedures

A proper plan that includes tactics and actions to be followed in the conducting of a study. This study combined two methods approach which was comprised of qualitative and quantitative research. According to Guest and Flamming (2017.03), the basic norms of research design is the mixture of more than a single form of data sources which offers a fuller understanding of a research problem than a mono-method approach. Furthermore, Klassen (2012:378) state that mixed-methods research is more than simply gathering numerous forms of qualitative or quantitative evidence and one advantage of combined methods research is that combined methods is practical in that it permits the usage of various systems and tactics that best address the research question. Qualitative research does not survey the territory, it mines it. Qualitative work is theoretical in its aims rather than descriptive, while quantitative methods have been associated with enumerative induction and allied with analytic initiation (Brannen, 2016.06). Diverse methods are more effective in obtaining rich information about job satisfaction.

3.3 Case Study Designs

Case study requires a descriptive analysis of cases which the researcher aims to study. It is concerned with the broaden and form of the case (2014.110). The design is popular and frequently utilised in business research.

3.3.1 What is a Case Study?

Case studies involve a geographical location, such as a workplace or organisation. The difference lies in understanding a bound situation or system. In case studies there are not always detailed or specific borders

between the cases functioning parts and the context in which operates. Case researchers tends to emphasise an intensive examination of the setting of context.

A case study research always seeking to reveal different landscapes of the case (idiographic approach). According to Bryman, Bell and Du Toit (2014.111) suggest that cases should be selected based on the anticipation of the opportunity to learn.

3.4 Target Population and Sampling

This study was conducted in schools within the uMgungundlovu district (school A and school B), and the KZN DOE (Pietermaritzburg). The study population comprises of learners in schools, headmasters, educators, dropped out learners, and officials of department of education. The total number of the targeted population of the study was 220 and the researcher categorised its population accordingly: Two headmasters, 12 educators, 90 learners per school (making the total number of learners 180), 20 dropped out learners (10 males and 10 females), four Pupil Governing Body members (SGB) for both schools, and two officials from the DOE. This study drew a heterogeneous population with an advantage of providing a diverse racial group of learners and educators with a mixed gender. This sample can also be regarded as proportionally representative of the study population (Dekeza - Tsomo,2012.39).

According to the sampling, two Principals, 12 educators, 180 learners for the respective schools, 20 dropped out learners, four members of the (SGB), and two employees from the DOE, in each of the two high schools were chosen as participants of the study. These participants were situated in uMgungundlovu district from two high schools. The participants (pupils) were from 10, 11, and 12, thirty pupils were selected per grade considering gender balance. The purposive sampling was applied during sampling.

The average age of learners as participants was 17 years. Educators at the two schools assisted in identifying these learners as participants in the study. Participants in both gender categories were represented. According to Dekeza-Tsomo (2012.40), the purposive sampling is based on selection considering the characteristics population.

3.5 Objectives of the research

Relevance, it is necessary to highlight the difference between private and public schools and the number of pupils who drop-out of schools in both private and public institutions. It is envisioned that this study has further revealed factors and challenges that cause pupils to drop out of school.

3.5.1 Specific Objectives:

- Examine retention strategies in schools to avoid learners dropping out.
- Identify challenges that are confronting the education department in terms of ensuring that learners are remained and complete their schooling.
- Recommend strategies and methods to retain pupils and reduce drop-out rates of learners.

3.6. Data Collection and Procedures

The method employed for this study was the survey method based on quantitative research and a semi-structured interview method, also based on a mixed research method. Interviews were conducted using the headmasters of the respective schools, the School Governing Body (SGB), and pupils who have dropped out as a form of qualitative research design. The researcher adopted instruments such as structured questionnaires and an interview schedule to collect data from a sample size of 220 participants. Data was triangulated since there were two data collection approaches utilised for this research study.

3.6.1 Phase 1: Site Visit and Questionnaire Distribution

The researcher visited the site to familiarise himself with the study location and to introduce himself to the relevant participants, the principal, school management, learners, and the DOE employees. The researcher also distributed a survey on the same day. Survey research involves a gathering of information from a sample of respondents that are part of a study and are expected to respond to questions. This type of research permits the respondents to respond to questions non-verbally and they can also do so in their own time without the presence of the researcher. Survey research can use quantitative research strategies, for example using questionnaires; qualitative research strategies, for example using closed and open-ended questions; or both strategies, which is called mixed methods (Ponto, (2015.02). The researcher was orientated and acquainted himself with the surroundings and made appointments for the conducting of research.

Data were also collected using self-administered questionnaires to the respective participants with the intention of obtaining a broad viewpoint of the factors, the survey was conducted from July for learners and educators and September 2018 for the DOE officials. The researcher distributed a hard copy of the questionnaires through contact persons and enumerators in various participants. This study employed a purposive sample and the researcher was able to target participants who were most appropriate for this study. The selection went

according to the sampling procedure chosen, which is purposive sampling. This comprises of classifying and picking individuals and groups with familiarity or experience with a phenomenon of attentiveness (Palinkas, 2015.02). Questionnaires were distributed to 12 educators and 105 learners for both schools. The total number of distributed questionnaires was 117 for the respective participants. A response rate of 100 % was achieved.

3.6.2 Phase 2 – Interviews

The researcher visited schools for the second time using the agreed time schedules that were negotiated with the school management. The researcher interviewed four student Governing Body members involving the chairperson and secretory of the structure for both schools. And two headmasters for school A and School B, the interviews were conducted in their respective offices. The researcher also visited the field to collect data from learners who had dropped out, the researcher was using a snow-balling technique to track down the learners who had dropped out of the school. The researcher managed to conduct the interviews to twenty dropped out learners (10 females and 10 males). An interview schedule was used to probe the respondents on various questions by the researcher using a one-on-one discussion between the researcher and a participant involving a transfer of information to the interviewer. There are different types of interviews and some of them are as follows: structured interview, semi-structured interview, and unstructured interview (Bell and Waters, 2014). The researcher chose semi-structured interviews because semi-structured interviews offer a more flexible tactic to the interview process and that flexibility allows the researcher to follow a sequence of less controlled questioning and permits the investigation of spontaneous issues raised by the interviewee to be undertaken. During the distribution of questionnaires, the researcher approached learners, educators, and employees from DOE. One-on-one interviews were conducted in July 2018 and completed with one respondent at a time in their different scheduled dates, up until October 2018. During interviews respondents were recorded using a tape recorder.

3.7. Data Analysis

3.7.1 Analysing survey data

Once the questionnaires had been completed by respondents, the researcher solicited the services of a statistician to analyse quantitative data collected using the questionnaires and computerised software (SPSS, V24).

3.7.2 Analysing interview data

The interviews were recorded using a tape recorder. The researcher then transcribed the responses and the transcriptions were examined by means of thematic coding as a main stage. When the coding was complete the researcher then interpreted the responses using theoretical concepts. The researcher analysed the qualitative

data and recorded interviews thematically. The advantages of using thematic analysis was that it provides a highly flexible approach that could be adapted for the needs of several studies, providing an ironic and a complete, yet complex, account of data. It was also valuable for summarising key structures of a large data set though it forces the researcher to yield a well-structured tactic to control data and serves to produce a rich ultimate report (Nowell *et al.,* 2017.02).

3.8. Pilot Study

It is firstly considered necessary for this study and it was successfully utilised. Ismail *et al.* (2018.02) postulate that a pilot study updates and offers responses to the final study and with these responses the researcher can create changes to enhance the research approach before trying for the final study.

In this study, questionnaires were distributed by the researcher personally to eight respondents who were not part of the target population with whom the researcher met to test the questionnaire. This was done so that the errors identified could be corrected before actual data collection to provide clarity to respondents, and to obtain insights into where the questionnaire needed improving.

3.9 Conclusion

A mixed-method design has been adopted in this study with the intention of finding the causal of learner dropout. The benefits of utilising mixed methods this study is the facts there are reliable and concrete in terms of results. Sampling of this study included learners still in school and those who have dropped out, educators, principals, and SGB chairpersons of each school to determine factual and concrete information of the all perspective that informs and contribute in education system.

The planning of the pilot study, designing and administering of the questionnaire, and the reliability and validity were all presented and discussed. The next chapter contains analysis and interpreting the collected information.

CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an in-depth analysis and interpretation of the study findings. The aim of this research was to determine the factors that influenced the learners to contemplate dropping out of schools, however, this is a comparative study of public and private schooling in the uMgungundlovu District (KwaZulu-Natal). Quantitative as well as qualitative research methods were utilised in this study.

This chapter also provides insight on data interpretation from information collected using data collection tool, which were administered to learners, educators, and government officials (DOE). Interviews were used for principals, School Governing Bodies (SGB), and learners who had dropped out of the two schools in order to gain a more qualitative understanding of their perceptions. The study focused specifically on school principals (n = 2), high school educators (n = 12) and learners from Grades 10, 11, and 12 (n = 180). For research purposes and to ensure confidentiality, all participants have been coded as follows:

- Principals are coded as Principal 1 for school A and Principal 2 for school B.
- Educators are coded as Educator 1 for school A and Educator 2 for school B.

4.2 Findings from Structured Questionnaires (Section A)

4.2.1. Biographical Information:

1. Educators' representativeness in the sample from both schools (A and B).

Figure 1: Total number of respondents
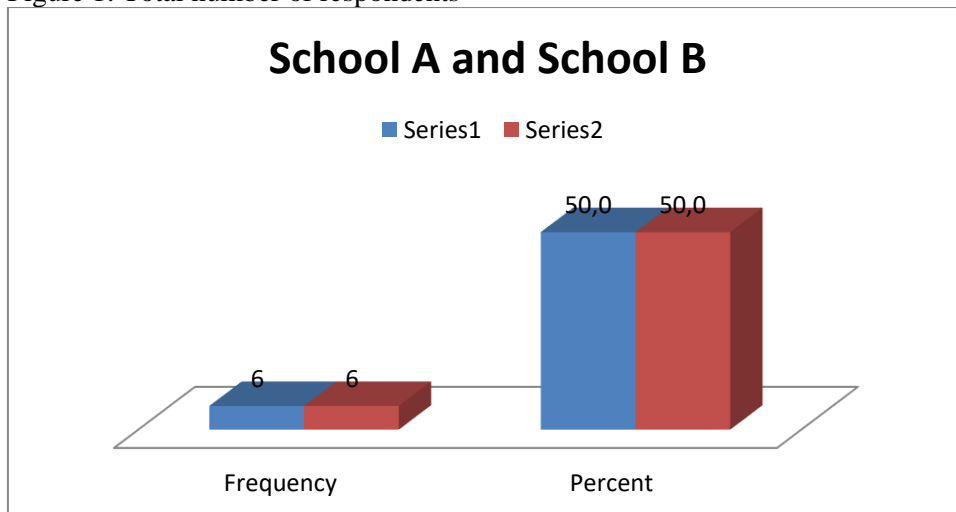
The figure above depicts the educator's percentage for both schools. The 25 % indicates educators for school A and the other 25 % indicates educators for school B, in total 50 % depicts the total number of educators who responded. The results revealed that the population was equal.

Table 2: Age groups of participants

	Educators	20-30	30-40	40-50	51 and above		Total
Valid		33.3%	16.7%	33%			
	Learners	14 - 15	16 - 17	18 – 19	20 – 21	> 21	
		6,9%	52,6%	37,6%	2,3%	0,6%	
	Learners who have dropped out	18 - 19	20 - 21	21 and above			
		9,5%	4,8%	85,7%			

The above table represents the sample size and response rates of the participants including educators, learners, and dropped out learners. Approximately 33, 3 % of the participants were educators within the 20 to 30 age groups. The 30 to 40 age groups represented 16, 7 % of the educators' sample, and 33.3 % for the 40- to 50- year olds. Between the age group of 20 to 30 and 40 to 50 there is an equivalent result.

Learners' responses indicate that age group of 14 to 15 is 6.9 %, ag - 16 to 17 indicate 52.6 %, ag- 18 to 19 indicate 37.6 %, ag- 20 to 21 indicates 2.3 %, and lastly ag - 21 indicates only 0.6 % of the population. The ag -of 16 to 17 has the largest percentage of 52.6 %.

The area denoting dropped out learners depicts that the age group of 18 to 19 is 9.5 % while ag- of 20 to 21 is 4,8 %, and the ag-of above 21 has the highest percentage of 85.7 %, which might support or reveal that age has the influence on drop-out rate.

Table 3 shows the age groups of the participants.

Government officials (DOE)	20-30	30-40	40-50	50-60	60 and above
Frequent (No: of participants)			2	1	
School Governing Body (SGB)	Less 25 years old	26-35	36-55	Over 55	
Frequent (No: of participants)		1	3		

The above table shows the age groups of the participants in years not in percentages since these participants contribute significantly in support of the results of this study.

The age group of 40 to 50 shows two participants (DOE) and age group of 50 to 60 shows one participant. This indicates that age group of 40 to 50 has the highest number of participants.

The age group of 26 to 35 shows one participant and the age group of 36 to 55 shows three participants. The age group of 36 to 55 shows the highest number of participants.

Most respondents were Africans (58.3 %), followed by White (33.3 %), and Coloured (8.3 %). Approximately 25 % of the educator respondents had four years of service at school, followed by 25 % who did not specify their year of experience (Other), and two educators indicated that their year of experience was two years (16.7 %). Approximately 8.3 % had worked for 11 to 20 years. This study's majority of participants were black. The results show that the sample was dominated by African people.

Figure 2. The racial composition of the sample is shown below.
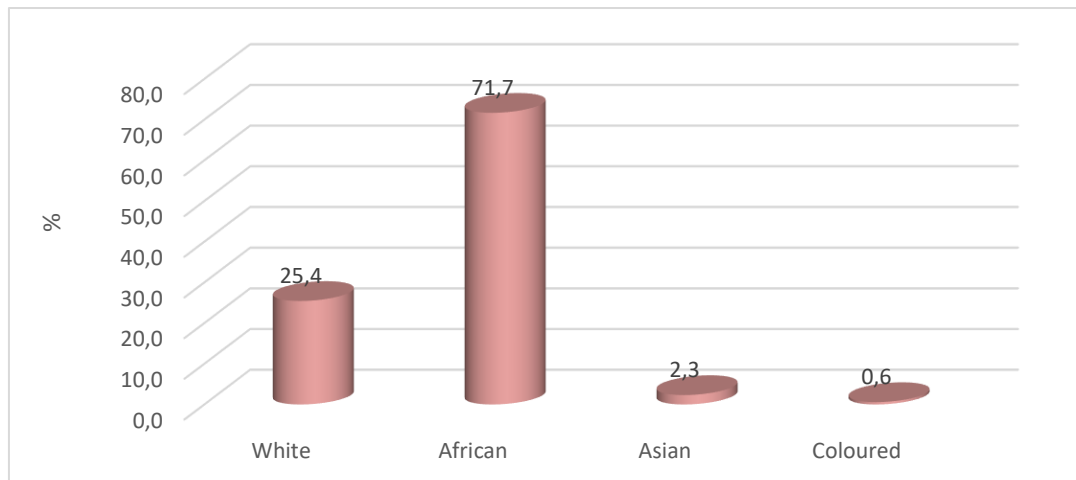
There were significantly more African respondents ($p < 0.001$) in the sample.

Figure 3. Teacher/learner ratio per class
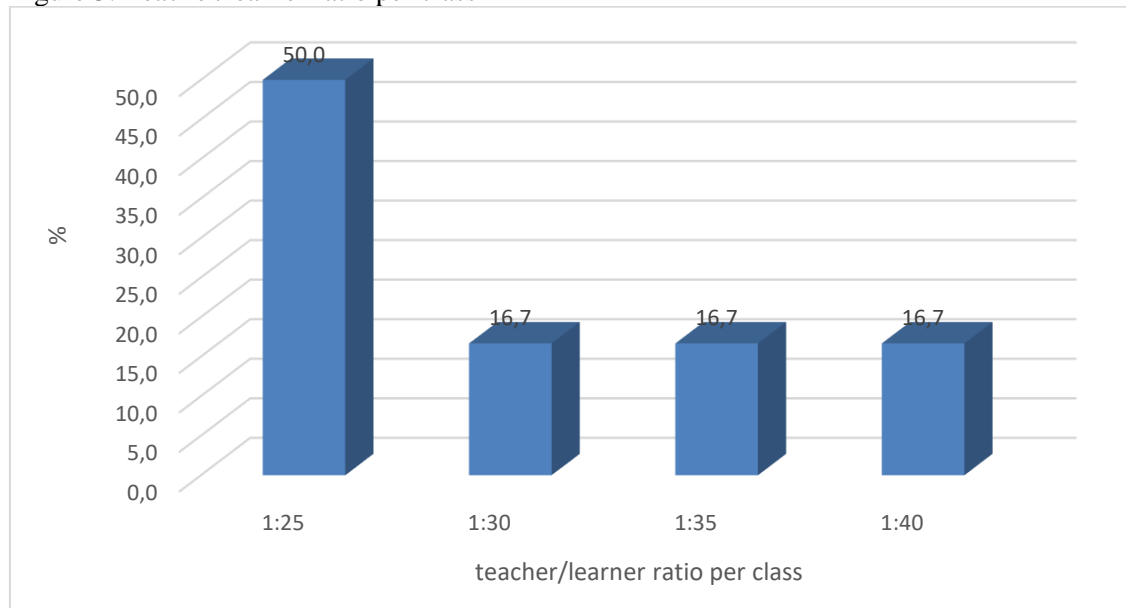
The illustration above depicts the teacher's to learner ratio in each class. The highest number of teachers (50%) has a 1:25 ratio. The rest of the teachers are distributed in classes with 1:30, 1:35, and 1:40 ratios. The national benchmarking is for the teacher to learner ration is 1:16. When the ratio is manageable, teachers can give attention to all leaners and perform better.

4.3 Findings from Structured Questionnaires (Section B)

4.3.1 Factors and challenges faced by educators during teaching

Table 4. Teenage pregnancy as one of the factors that cause girls to drop out of school

Valid	Frequency	%
False	1	8,3
Most likely false	4	33,3
Possibly true	4	33,3
Definitely True	3	25,0
Total	12	100

The participants were probed on whether teenage pregnancy contributes to drop-out rates. In the above table

38

of results, 33.3 % of the teachers disagreed with the statement that teenage pregnancy is one of the factors causing females to drop-out, whilst 33.3 % agreed with the statement, 25.0 % fully agreed and 8.3 % did not agree. The study done by Spaull (2015.37) confirms that most of the female pupils drop out due to teenage pregnancy. The National Policy for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy (2017) seeks to address the teenage pregnancy problem among pupils.

Table 5. Is alcohol and drug abuse one of the contributing factors that lead to learner drop-out?

Valid	Frequency	%
False	3	25,0
Most likely false	1	8,3
Possibly true	5	41,7
Definitely true	3	25,0
Total	12	100,0

This table reveals that 41.7 % of the teachers approved that drug and substance abuse lead to school dropouts. Another 25 % mostly agreed while another 25 % disagreed. The minority of 8.3 % disagreed with the statement. Associating yourself with people or learners who are doing wrong things at school, such as using drugs and alcohol, involving in early sexual activity and bad behaviour that positioned the learner in a high risk of contemplating dropout (Mnguni.2014).

According to Dekeza-Tsomo (2012.18), clarifies the variety and negative effectiveness of the drug abuse such drinking and smoking. Further explain the damages can cause to a person's brain or mind to function unusually or harmfully to others. Most of these chemical substances are not legalised to be utilised by people.

Dekeza-Tsomo further states that drugs refer to a substance that reacts with the nervous system, such as stimulants or narcotics that may cause addiction. A drug addict is a person whose functionality relies on drug usage. Drug use and abuse is a worldwide problem, it is a well-known fact that younger people are using drugs such as glue, thinners, cooking sprays, petrol, and the most devastating drug that is currently used, wunga or Nyaope. Drug abuse is an international issue most of the countries are facing with as a devastating phenomenon. A learner who is taking drugs does not perform well or behave in an accepted manner at school. According Dekeza-Tsomo (2012.18), in South Africa the most consumed drug is alcohol and dagga, which is mostly used by adolescents (WHO.1999.102).

Table 6. Scholar transport is the most important tool to reduce the number of learners who are dropping out of school due to long walking distances

		Frequency	%
Valid	Definitely false	2	16,7
	Most likely false	3	25,0
	Possibly true	7	58,3
	Total	12	100,0

Approximately 58.3 % of the teachers agreed that scholar transport is especially important to reduce learner drop-out rates, compared with 25.0 % of the respondents who disagreed. The National Learner Transport Policy (2015) further confirms that the provision of scholar transport appears as the priority of education department. This challenge emanates from apartheid practices that ensured that most of the society was placed in areas that were largely inaccessible. And because of the complexity of the current transport needs resulting from increased economic activity.

The issues pose awfully specific challenges to the transportation of learners to and from schools. The ability of learners to access education is hampered by the long distances they must travel to get to school, threats to their safety and security, and the cost of transport. Learners have difficulty accessing educational institutions due to the inadequacy of learner transport and insufficient schools in areas where they live. The situation is compounded by the transportation of learners in un-roadworthy vehicles, which results in a high rate of accidents. The implementation and management of learner transport policies has also taken different forms in various provinces.

Table 7. Performance and success of a child or learner is determined by the support the learner is getting from home, either financially or socially.

Valid		Frequency	%
	Definitely false	1	8,3
	Most likely false	2	16,7
	Possibly true	9	75,0
	Total	12	100,0

Based on the above data, about 75.0 % of the teachers agreed that the performance of the child or learner at school is determined by the support he/she is getting from home, either financially or socially. Furthermore, 25 % of the teachers disagreed with the statement. According to De Witte ,(2013.10) state that household that are falling under the low socio-economic status, for example those with limited social capital, in socially and geographically marginalised positions, and where key adult members are unemployed, certainly struggle the most to keep their children in school, in spite of the government's provision of Child Support Grants and fee waivers to such families.

According to Dekeza-Tsomo (2012.12), the Poor Family Socialisation Theory asserts that families provide many of the chief foundations and experiences for later life, including academic achievement and success in school. Early influences include divorce, family stress parental behavioural control and acceptance and, most importantly, parents' own education levels. Therefore, low parent expectations and educational levels would have direct effects on school drop-out rates over and above the mediating influence of low academic achievement.

Table 8. Learners that come from poor backgrounds tend to drop out more often compared to those who come from privileged backgrounds.

Valid		Frequency	%
	False	1	8,3
	Most likely false	3	25,0
	Don't know	1	8,3
	Possibly true	7	58.3
	Total	12	100

About 58.3 % of teachers concur and 25.0 % did not agree. According to Hartack, *et al.* (2017), based on the international literature, it clearly states that community-related factors focuses commonly on factors such as neighbourhood characteristics, there are high drop-out rates for people from poor neighbourhoods. This where social facilities are limited, and housing is run-down and rented rather than owned. However, the crime rate is very compared to other locations. (De Witte. 2013; November 2010).

Table 9. Lateness and absenteeism are some of the issues that could result in a learner dropping out of school.

Valid		Frequency	%
	Definitely false	1	8,3
	Most likely false	2	16,7
	Possibly true	3	25,0
	Definitely true	6	50,0
	Total	12	100.0

Most of the teacher respondents (50.0 %) definitely agreed with the impact of lateness and absenteeism on learner drop-out, while 25.0 % indicated a possibility of this statement to be true. However, 16.7 % did not agree with the statement and 8.3 % of the respondents strongly disagreed. According to the Policy on Learner Attendance of 2010 aims to promote punctual and regular school attendance and provides standardised procedures for recording and monitoring learner attendance. It also ensures that learners and their parents will be treated equitably across provinces. The Policy on Learner Attendance (2010.7) stipulates that it is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that the learner attends school daily. The SASA (1996) provides for actions to be taken if a learner who is within the age of compulsory school attendance abstains from school without providing an explanation. Permissible reasons for learner absenteeism are outlined in the Policy on Learner Attendance of 2010.

The Policy on Learner Attendance (2010, p.8) requires the school timetable to indicate the time during which the class register will be marked (the registration period). The class register must be marked at the start of the morning session. However, if it is a historical practice for a school to mark the class register at ten o'clock in the morning, there is no need to change its practice. The school must do its utmost to promote and monitor punctual attendance at the start of the school day. Furthermore, learners are expected to attend school on time and must be required to do so.

Table 10. Repeating the same class several times could result in the learner losing interest in attending school

Valid	Frequency	%
Most likely false	4	33,3
Possibly true	3	25,0
Definitely true	5	41,7
Total	12	100,0

Table 8 above indicates that 41.7 % of the respondents concurred (definitely true) that repeating the same class several times could result in the learner losing interest in attending the school, whilst 33.3 % did not agree (Most likely false) with the statement. Dekeza-Tsomo (2012.22) defines the concept of retention as the practice of having a learner repeat a grade level because of low academic performance. Retention is one of the most common factors that put learners at risk of dropping out, because the learner might become an over-age learner in that particular grade. Comparing the impact of retention with other educational levels or qualifications, grade retention is one of the most powerful predictors of dropping out. Learners who are retained are two to 11 times are more likely to drop out during High School than non-retained.

According to poor academic achievement theory (2012.15) assets that the poor performance of the pupil result in poor achievement. The progression is hindered by the poor results of the pupil against the standardised achievement tests or Grade Point Averages (GPA),thus the pupil will remain in the same class which is determined as the one of the strongest predictors of dropping out of school when the poor performance is associated with other social factors and economic factors which contributes tremendously in the pupils vision (Dekeza-Tsomo *et al*., 2012.14).

Table 11. School management is playing a huge role in addressing the issue of dropping out at the school.

	Frequency	%
False	2	16,7
Most likely false	1	8,3
Do not know	2	16,7
Possibly true	3	25,0
Definitely true	4	33,3
Total	12	100,0

Approximately 33, 3 % of the teacher respondents fully agreed that school management are doing their best in addressing the learner drop-out problem, supported by 25.0 % who possibly agreed. However, 16.7 % disagreed with the statement and another 16.7 % of the respondents did not know to give a straight answer.

According to Dekeza-Tsomo (2012.24), (TST) are a school-based structure, problem-solving groups which function to support learners through teacher collaboration. The most significant role of the TST is to put in place properly coordinated learner and educator support services that will support the learning and teaching process by identifying and addressing learner, educator, and institutional needs. The Education White Paper 6 (2001.6) stipulates the Ministry of Education's commitment to the provision of educational opportunities, in particular for those learners who experience or have experienced barriers to learning and development or who have dropped out of learning because of the inability of the education and training system to accommodate their learning needs. Further explain the development of an inclusive education and training system will adopt the National Strategic Plan, in order to assist those pupils who are victims of HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB) and Sexually Transmitted Disease (STIs).

According to Section 8 (3) of the SASA of 1996 stipulates that the determined guidelines or framework that must be adopted by SGB in order to function accordingly. In addition, Section 8(4) asserts that the pupils must comply with the code of conduct failing which necessary actions must be conducted to execute disciplinary measures if any pupil is found violating the code of conduct.

Table 12. Scholar transport assists in learners arriving at school on time.

	Frequency	%
Definitely false	1	8,3
Do not know	4	33,3
Possibly true	4	33,3
Definitely true	3	25,0
Total	12	100,0

Table 10 shows responses to the question of whether scholar transport assists in learners arriving at school on time. About 33.3 % of the teacher respondents agreed that indeed scholar transport assists learners to get to or arrive at school on time while 33.3 % did not know. A further 25.0 % strongly agreed with the statement and 8.3 % disagreed with the statement. The NSTP (2015), promotes that through rendering the best quality and equal of learner transportation. This learner transport policy came as rescue in rural communities especially learners from rural and disadvantaged communities, it will improve pass rate and reduce late coming and absenteeism.

The government's priorities of proving a better educational system and safe communities find resonance in this policy. It is paramount for the regulatory framework to safely guide the norms and standards and regulations for learner transport operations. The main trust of the policy is to ensure that learners, schools, parent, communities, planners and law enforcement authorities are governed by a uniform set of priorities and regulations. However, most learners are walking longer distance to reach their schools. Some learners are using private scholar transport and some of these respective private scholar transport does not meet the requirements as it stipulated in the NSTP (2015.

Table 13. During winter there is noticeably more learners absent which could result in eventual drop-out of learners.

	Frequency	%
Definitely false	3	25,0
Most likely false	1	8,3
Do not know	1	8,3
Possibly true	5	41,7
Definitely true	2	16,7
Total	12	100,0

Most of the respondents (41.7 %) agreed that there is more absenteeism in winter which could result in dropouts. A mere 25.0 % disagreed with the statement. According to Mafa (2018.20) environmental factors contribute significantly to learner non-attendance in rural schools. Extreme weather conditions that are hazardous to learners can consequently affect learner non-attendance. Floods, heavy thunderstorms, and snow, for instance, can result in some learners not attending school (Hogan, 2008). Pupils who must walk long distances to school will not attend if they see that heavy rains are about to emanate; some might be late for school resulting in partial absenteeism. Very cold weather can result in rural learners not attending school as they are generally from poor families which cannot afford to buy jerseys to wear at school.

Table 14. The correct punishment is exercised to those learners who are caught taking drugs or alcohol at school.

	Frequency	%
Definitely false	2	16,7
Most likely false	1	8,3
Do not know	2	16,7
Possibly true	1	8,3
Definitely true	5	41,7
Total	12	100,0

About 41.7 % of teachers agreed that the correct punishment is used to stop learner drug or substance abuse in schools, whilst 16.7 % of the respondents disagreed. According to the South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996 (Act 84 of 1996), (9) (1), the Governing Body of a public school may, after a fair hearing, suspend a

learner from attending school as a correctional measure for a period not longer than a week. It further declares that only the Head of Department and school management (SGB and SMT) has the right to expel the learner after being found guilty of serious misconduct.

Table 15. Teachers play a crucial role in preventing learners from dropping out of school.

	Frequency	%
Definitely false	1	8,3
Most likely false	1	8,3
Do not know	1	8,3
Possibly true	3	25,0
Definitely true	6	50,0
Total	12	100,0

The table above shows that 50.0 % of teacher respondents fully agreed with the above statement, 25.0 % possibly agreed with the statement, and 8.3 % were too unclear to agree or disagree.

According to Dekeza-Tsomo (2012.24), Teacher Support Teams (TST) are school-based, problem-solving groups which understand the conditions and dynamics pupils are facing with during learning and outside classroom. Diagnostic process should assist TST to come up with tailored strategies that could assist pupils who are vulnerable to dropped out.

Table 16. Teachers play a crucial role in encouraging learners who have dropped out to return to school.

	Frequency	%
Definitely false	1	8,3
Most likely false	1	8,3
Do not know	3	25,0
Possibly true	5	41,7
Definitely true	2	16,7
Total	12	100,0

Table 14 shows that 41.7 % of the respondents concur that it is upon their shoulders to ensure that pupils remain in school until their graduation. However, 8.3 % strongly disagreed and another 8.3 % found the

statement to be most likely false, also disagreeing with the statement. The constitution of SA encourages everyone to attend school including adults, according to Section 29(1) (a) of the Constitution of the RSA. And the schools should be more available and accessible. Consequently, school management must ensures that no learner is left behind due to the fact that is not doing well academically, however, educators and School governance play their role to further investigate why the learner decided to drop-out of school, (White Paper 6, 2001.16).

Table 17. A disadvantaged background contributes to learner drop-out.

	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	2	16,7
Disagree	1	8,3
Agree	7	58,3
Strongly Agree	2	16,7
Total	12	100,0

Table 17 shows that 58.3 % agreed that a disadvantaged background contributes to learner drop-out, 16.7 % strongly agreed, while 16.7 % strongly disagreed with the statement and 8.3 % disagreed with the above statement. According to Dr Andrew Hartnack (2017.05) state that households with uneducated adult who are not working present a huge challenge to keep their children at school due to some different factors such as poverty and other contributing factor that might hinder the potential of the pupil.

Table 18. Grade 10 is the most common grade where dropouts occur.

	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	1	8,3
Disagree	7	58,3
Neutral	1	8,3
Agree	3	25,0
Total	12	100,0

Approximately 58.3 % of teacher respondents disagreed with the statement that Grade 10 is the most common grade where dropouts occur. Some 25.0 % agreed, 8.3 % were neutral, and lastly, 8.3 % disagreed. According to Dr Andrew Hartnack (2017.01) frequent dropout mainly dominant in grade 10 and 11 where most of the pupils begin to be exposed to variety of things. According to Spaull (2015.34) state that about 50 % of learners in any one cohort dropping out before reaching Grade 12. The condition is even more worrying when National Senior Certificate (NSC) graduation rates are considered. In 2013, only 40 % of those who had attended school for 12 years previously passed matric, while in 2014 the figure fell to 36 % (ibid., p.36).

Table 19. Repeating the same class several times might lead the learner to contemplate dropping out.

	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	3	25,0
Disagree	2	16,7
Neutral	5	41,7
Agree	2	16,7
Total	12	100,0

Most teachers (41.7%) felt that repeating the same class several times might lead to drop-out. Some 25.0 % disagreed, 16.7 % were neutral, and 16.7 % strongly disagreed. Grade retention is found as the most factor that contribute massively to dropout rate. Learner who are affected by grade retention are more vulnerable which continues to affect learner self-esteem (De Witte, 2013.8). According to Hartack (2017.06) reveal that older than classmates and the repeating of grades come with their own stigmas, however, older learners are more vulnerable to other things, like pull-out factors such as pregnancy and the need to work.

Table 20. Boys are more often the victims of drug abuse as compared to girls.

	Frequency	%
Strongly Disagree	1	8,3
Disagree	2	16,7
Neutral	4	33,3
Agree	5	41,7
Total	12	100,0

Most teachers (41.7% and 33.3%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively that boys are more prone to drug abuse than girls. The pupil who associate himself with high-risk peer group and engaging in high-risk social behaviour for example: staking drugs and alcohol also meaningfully increases the chance of dropping out (Mnguni, 2014). According to Strassburg (2010), further state that males are more vulnerable to these respective social ills, consequently they tend to dropout school frequently than female's counterpart.

Table 21. Teenage pregnancy requires collective effort in order to be effectively addressed. For example: SMT and parents

	Frequency	%
Neutral	6	50,0
Agree	1	8,3
Strongly Agree	5	41,7
Total	12	100,0

Table 21 depicts that 50.0 % neither agree nor disagree with the statement that school management together with parents need to solve the teenage pregnancy problem together. Approximately 41.7 % strongly agreed and 8.3 % agreed with the statement. Female pupil from grade 10 to 12 are more vulnerable to sexual violence and harassment .The Guidelines for the Prevention and Management of Sexual Violence and Harassment in Public Schools (2008) have been developed to support schools and school communities in responding to cases of sexual harassment and sexual violence that are committed against learners. These guidelines are formulated with a direct intention to reduce the number of sexual cases by creating school environment that is safe, caring and enabling teaching environment.

The approved NPPMLP (2017) seek to address the issue of unplanned pregnancy which is more dominant in the public schools compared to private schools. This policy further provides the standards of how the pregnant pupils should be treated and when she is not allowed to be in school.

Table 22. Peer pressure in most instances has a negative influence on learners.

	Frequency	%
Neutral	1	8,3
Agree	5	41,7
Strongly Agree	6	50,0
Total	12	100,0

Table 22 depicts that 50.0 % strongly agreed, 41.7 % agreed, while 8.3 % were neutral. According to Deepika and Prema (2017), Peer pressure has a great influence amongst pupils especial in school premises because that where all begins, its start by behavioural change (Weinfied, 2010). The behaviour is more associated with adolescent stage.

The pressure it not always produces negative results however, sometimes it produces positive results, for example a high performance in class or studies, voluntary charity, public work etc. (Kellie, 2013). However, negative results are more noticeable as they normally result to dropouts. Subsequently, dropped out learners normally involves themselves with wrong people like gangsters and conduct bad activities like steal and destroy public properties (Arief, 2011).

Table 23. Grade 10, 11 and 12 learners are mostly affected by the issue of drop-out rates compared to other grades.

	Frequency	%
Neutral	3	25,0
Agree	5	41,7
Strongly Agree	4	33,3
Total	12	100,0

According to Table 23 above, 41.7 % agreed and 33.3 % strongly agree while 25.0 % remained neutral on the statement that Grade 10, 11, and 12 learners are more affected by the issue of drop-out rates than other grades. According to DOE through its Management Systems (EMIS) in 2001, continue to reveal the high number of pupils leaving the school especially between Grade 1 to 11, (DOE, 2003.16).

According to Dekeza-Tsomo (2012.05), these drop-out patterns mostly manifest in rural societies. Learner drop-out analysis by province shows that in the King Williams Town area, and the wider rural districts of the Eastern Cape, Grades 9, 10, and 11 consistently experience the highest drop-out rates (DoE, 2006.83). This trend also applies nationally, even after the drop-out rate is adjusted for Grade repetition (Dekeza-Tsomo *et al*., 2012.05).

4.4 Analysis of Empirical Findings Based on Quantitative Method (Learner Questionnaires)

Figure 4. Learners per school
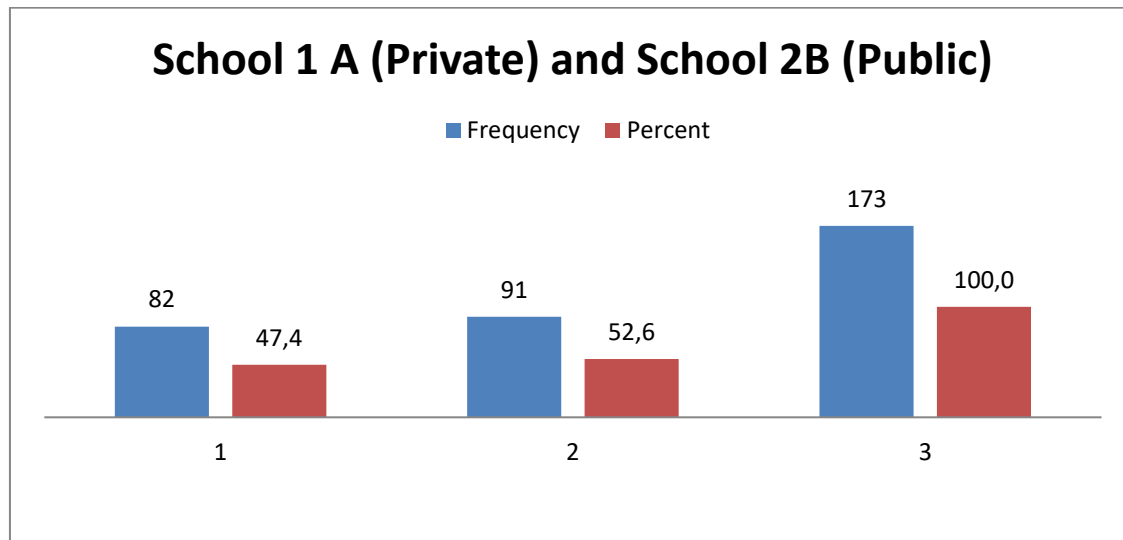
Figure 4 shows that 52.6 % of learners were reached in a public school and 47.4 % in a private school. The researcher intended to reach 180 participants while the researcher only managed to reach 173 learners in both schools.

There was also a similar number of respondents by grade (p = 0.793) (see Figure 5 below).

Figure 5. Percentage of learner respondents by grade
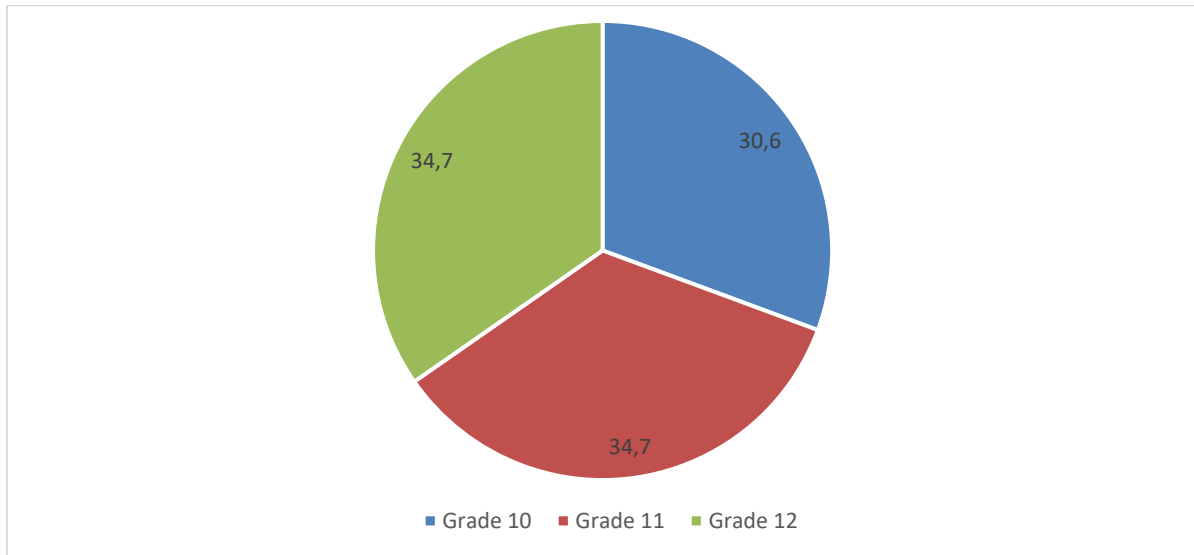
Figure 5 indicates the number of respondents by grade. Grade 11 and 12 contributed 34.7 % of participants each while Grade 10 reached 30.6 %.

The descriptive statistics for the number of years that the respondents have been at the school is shown below.

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
173	1.00	6.00	3.3642	1.11036

On average, respondents have been at this study school for 3.4 years with a standard deviation of 1.1 years.

Table 24. In which year was your first registration in this school?

	Frequency	%
2012	5	2.9
2013	15	8.7
2014	62	35.8
2015	59	34.1
2016	20	11.6
2017	12	6.9
Total	173	100.0

Table 24 shows the year of first registration, with 2.9 % learners registered in 2012, 8.7 % in 2013, 35.8 % in 2014, 34.1 % in 2015, 11.6 % in 2016, and 6.9 % in 2017. The significance of the first registration in 2012 (2.9%) indicates that there were smaller number of learners who registered compared to learners registered in 2017 (6.9 %).

Section Analysis

The section that follows analyses the scoring patterns of the respondents per variable section.

The results are first presented using summarised percentages for the variables that constitute each section.

Results are then further analysed according to the importance of the statements.

SECTION B

This section deals with the analysis of interviews.

Table 25. Summary of scoring patterns.

		Definitely false		Most likely false		Do not know		Possibly true		Definitely true		Chi Square
		Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	p-value
Teenage pregnancy a factor that causes girls to drop-out of school.	B1	13	7.5%	7	4.0%	10	5.8%	74	42.8%	69	39.9%	0.000
Substance abuse is mostly used by boys and is a common cause for dropping out of school.	B2	9	5.2%	17	9.8%	26	15.0%	59	34.1%	62	35.8%	0.000
Scholar transport is an important tool in reducing the number of learners who are dropping out the school.	B3	38	22.0%	36	20.8%	50	28.9%	27	15.6%	22	12.7%	0.009
The performance and success of a learner is determined by the support the learner is getting from home, either financially or socially.	B4	4	2.3%	7	4.1%	8	4.7%	61	35.5%	92	53.5%	0.000
Learners that come from poor backgrounds compared to those who come from privileged backgrounds tend to drop-out of school.	B5	41	23.8%	42	24.4%	34	19.8%	41	23.8%	14	8.1%	0.003
Late coming and absenteeism are the factors that could result in a learner dropping out of school.	B6	22	12.7%	35	20.2%	30	17.3%	51	29.5%	35	20.2%	0.011
Repeating the same class several times could result in the learner losing interest in attending school and thus drop-out.	B7	9	5.3%	9	5.3%	17	10.0%	53	31.2%	82	48.2%	0.000

| School management is playing a huge role in addressing the issue of drop-outs at the school. | B8 | 45 | 26.5 % | 24 | 14.1 % | 46 | 27.1 % | 24 | 14.1 % | 31 | 18.2 % | 0.007 |

Figure 6. The results showing the pattern of respondents.
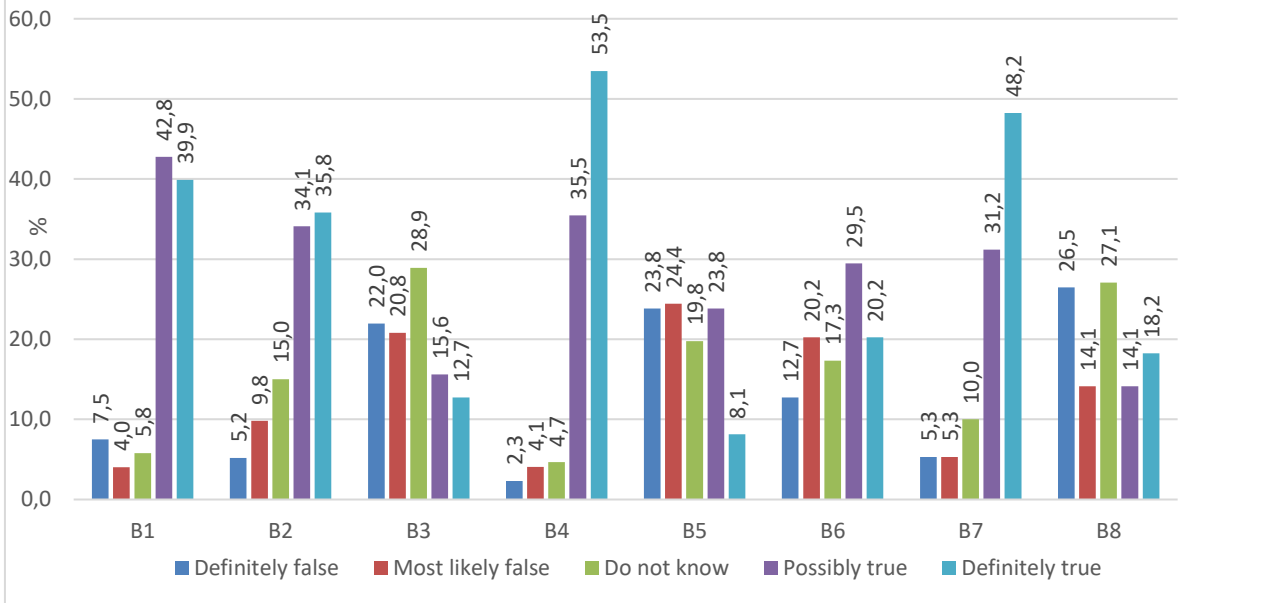
The results of the respondents appears as follows:

- Some statements show significantly higher levels of agreement (true) whilst other levels of agreement are lower, but still greater than levels of disagreement (false).

- Three statements indicate higher levels of disagreement (false) (B3, B5, B8).

4.8 Analysis of Findings Based on Interviews with Dropped Out Learners.

This section covers interview questions one to 13. A presentation of results and inferences will be outlined below.

The findings of the study reflect that most of the respondents (52.4%) were female and 47.6 % were male. Approximately 85.7 % of participants were above 21 years of age, while 9.5 % were 18 to 19 years. Participants between the ages of 20 to 21 were 4.8 %, which was the lowest percentage compared to other respondents. The results indicate that participants older than 21 years of age were the keenest to participate in the study.

Question 1: What was the reason for dropping out of school?

The respondents were asked to provide their reasons for dropping out of school. Most stated their reasons and some of the reasons were common among the learners. One of the leaners said:

"I got pregnant and my child was getting sick frequently, sometimes I was called from school to come and look after her, consequently, I ended up dropping out of school to look after her" (2018 October).

"I did not comply and accept corporal punishment as a result I decided to drop-out school" (2018 October).

These reasons provide some guidance regarding the actions needed to manage or reduce factors leading to drop-outs. According to the National Education Policy Act (27 of 1996), the Minister of Education is responsible for outlining any policy regarding education, and for the general functioning of the education system.

Another responded said:

"*Due to behaviour I was expelled from school" (2018 October). "The educator had the influence to fail me, due to grade repeating I decided to drop-out school" (2018 October).*

"Parents died and there was no one to look after me" (2018 October).

"Due to Health Condition and lot of absenteeism I decided to leave the school" (2018 October).

"Due the long distance I was travelling or walking from and to school as a result I was always late at school" (2018 October).

This includes policies on education support services, including health, welfare, career, and vocational development, counselling and guidance for educational institutions, as well as curriculum frameworks and learning standards (Act 27 0f 1996, section 3(4) L and O).

Question 2: What was the grade that you last attended?

The respondents were asked about the grade he/she last attended while he/she was still in school. The responses appear as follows:

Figure 7. Last grade attended respondents (%)
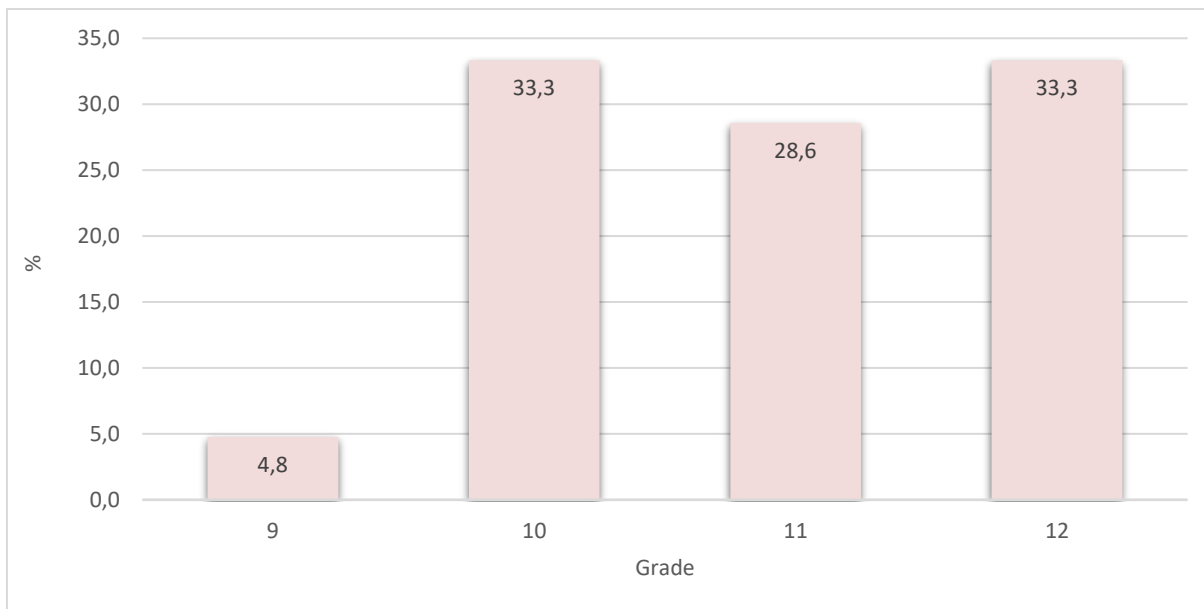
The illustration above depicts that 33.3 % last attended Grade 10, secondly, those who last attended Grade 11 were 28.6 % of the population, thirdly, 33.3 % are those who last attended Grade 12, and lastly, 4.8 % last attended Grade nine. According to Andrew (2017.08), struggling learners in schools which perform poorly in the NSC are at a much higher risk of dropping out than struggling learners in schools which perform better (Branson *et al*., 2013.17) and it has been found that poor quality education after grade nine is a particularly important causal factor in drop-out rates among senior secondary school learners (Dieltiens and Meny-Gibert, 2009.48). Indeed, "by Grade 9, learners in poor (mostly black) schools, have a [learning] backlog of approximately 3.5 years relative to their rich school counterparts" (Moses *et al*., 2017.3). Thus, while the education system and school level push-out factors are factors globally (see De Witte *et al.,* 2013), South Africa has a particularly potent mix of school factors contributing, in relationship with pull-out factors, to drop-out rates.

Question 3: In which year did you drop out?

Table 26. Year of school drop-out.

YEAR OF DROP-OUT	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
2001	1	4,8
2007	1	4,8
2008	1	4,8
2009	1	4,8
2010	1	4,8
2012	3	14,3
2013	1	4,8
2014	4	19,0
2015	2	9,5
2016	2	9,5
2017	1	4,8
2018	3	14,3

TOTAL	21	100

Table 26 shows that the highest proportion of dropouts occurred in 2014, as depicted by 19.0 % of total drop-out numbers. Dr Andrew (2017.8) asserts that pressure on schools to perform well in their NSCs also contributes greatly to pushing learners out of school in grades 10 and 11. A 2001 DOE directive setting national pass rate targets resulted in many struggling schools simply culling or weeding weaker learners out before they reached matric, either by retaining them in lower grades for multiple years (Branson *et al*., 2013.4) or by pressurising them in other ways to leave prior to grade 12 (Dieltiens and Meny-Gibert, 2009.49). Other authors (Gustafsson, 2011.39) have pointed to poor and inappropriate subject choices and combinations as a factor causing learners to disengage and leave school early. Pregnant learners, meanwhile, have also experienced pressure to leave school from school authorities, despite this being against policy (Spaull, 2015.37).

4. Question: What challenges have you experienced since dropping out of school?

The respondents were asked to identify their challenges since they dropped out of school:

"I'm not working, and I have been trying to look for peace jobs since I left school" (2018 September).

"I`m staying at home and getting bored ended up engaging myself into alcohol" (2018 September).

"I have no money –and I cannot afford life, I can't even take care of my child financially" (2018 October).

"There is nobody working at home and I have to work hard in order to take care of them" (2018 October).

"Family members are giving me attitude since I`m not working I can't even eat peacefully because they will say negative things to me" (2018 October).

"I`m staying alone no one is taking care of me since my parents died (poverty)" (2018 October).

According to Dekeza-Tsomo (2012.23), poverty in South Africa manifests itself in ill health, under nourishment, deprivation of privileges, unsupportive environments in informal settlements and squatter camps, language deficiencies, limited social status, and a negative view of the future. Other factors which contribute to poverty in South Africa are the backlog in technology, conflict and violence, crime, and substance abuse (Dekeza-Tsomo, 2012.24 Prinsloo *et al.*, 2005.451). Poverty has been identified as a major risk factor for learners regarding dropping out of school. That is why the DOE has started a nutrition programme (feeding scheme) at schools, which seeks to alleviate hunger among learners coming from poverty-stricken communities. Dekeza-Tsomo (2012.18) further explains that drug use and abuse by learners is not a new phenomenon as it has prevailed for more than decades worldwide, and especially in South Africa. Drug use and abuse by high school learners has brought about many problems in schools and society at large.

Question 5: Are you planning to get back to school?

Table 27. Answers on whether drop-out learners still wish to get back to school

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	%
Yes	8	38,1
No	7	33,3
No money	5	23,8
Not yet but if anyone could help	1	4,8
Would like to go to FET	1	4,8
Very old now	1	4,8
Really want to but don't have and ID	1	4,8
Would like to go back but not yet decided	1	4,8
Next year	1	4,8
Age	1	4,8

Table 27 shows that the highest number of respondents (38.1%) still want to go back to school and finish their studies, while 33.3 % are not interested in education anymore. About 23, 8 % indicated that they would consider education if someone could help. According to Andrew (2017.16), in defining re-engagement and reintegration; as much as dropout prevention is crucial, however, finding ways to re-engage and reintegrate those who have already dropped out is also imperative (Moore, 2016), especially since their life and career prospects without a school-leavers certificate have been shown to be inadequate (Moses *et al.*, 2017.42).

Taking into consideration that learners who are older than their classmates are at the highest risk of dropping out, and often become frustrated and cause disruptions, reintegrating dropouts back into the conventional schooling system is not easy. According to Andrew (2017.16), in the USA re-engagement is becoming a large focus with some notable successes (Moore, 2016), schools without the human and financial resources, or the necessary systems (such as most under-resourced South African schools) might struggle to reintegrate dropouts to the same extent. Second-chance programmes which work with dropouts and those who are struggling to complete their NSC are one method by which to re-engage those who have dropped out (Hartnack, 2014). However, organisations and finishing schools such as Gadra Matric (Grahamstown), Midlands Community College (Nottingham Road), the Star Schools, Msunduzi Finishing, Nomaswazi finishing, and Elangeni FET (NCV), have achieved impressive results in their work with learners who have failed their NSC exams (ibid.). The National Youth Development Agency also supports learners looking to re-write their exams. As others have argued, including dropouts from the mainstream education system in vocational and experiential educational opportunities, so that they may obtain an "alternative credential" (De Witte *et al.*, 2013.17) is also crucial (Dichaba, 2013; Gustafsson, 2011; Pinnock, 2016).

6. Question: Do your parents encourage you to return to school?

Table 28. Parents' encouragement to go back to school

RESPONDENTS (responses)		FREQUENCY (# of respondents)	Percentage (%)
Valid	Yes	11	52,4
	They did but I refused to, and the teachers refused as well	1	4,8
	Yes, registered at FET	1	4,8
	Parents passed away	3	14,3
	My aunt takes care of me and she encourages me	1	4,8
	They do but not to the respective schools	1	4,8
	They do but the school is saying that he is too old to go back	1	4,8
	They always do since I am helping them financially	1	4,8
	Yes, but I declined	1	4,8
	Total	21	100,0

Table 28 depicts that 52.4 % stated yes, their parents encourage them to get back to school, 14.3 % lost their parents, 4.8 % were encouraged but refused, 4.8 % decided to register at FET. According to Andrew (2017.05), orphan-hood is a major risk factor: as Fleisch *et al*. (2009.44) found, 32 % of children out of school have one or both parent's dead. Children living in child-headed households are also much more likely to be out of school, or drop out of school, than counterparts living with close adult relatives (Fleisch *et al*., 2009.44). Shocks at a family level, such as illness, death, and loss of employment can play a major role in the decision to drop-out (Branson *et al*., 2013.12).

Figure 8. Question 6: Has anyone from the school, either the principal or teacher, visited you or encouraged you to return to school?
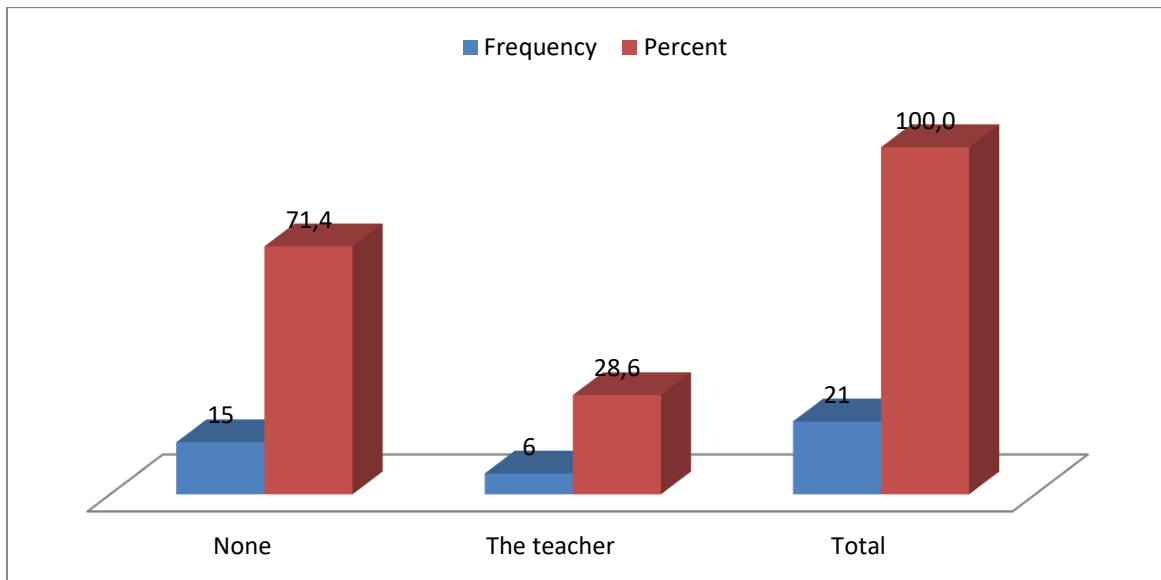
Figure 8 shows that 71.4 % of the learner respondents indicated that none of the teachers or principals visited them to encourage them to go back to school. Approximately 28.6 % of the teachers and principals visited the learners or their homes after drop-out (2018 October). Even though the figure bellow depicts that 28.6 % of the educators visited learners who have dropped out, the question one must ask is are there is any of the learners who came back to re-register again and if so, it could be an indication enough that the educator's visits were significant and effective.

Figure 9. Do you have friends who have dropped out the school or people you may know? If yes, how many?
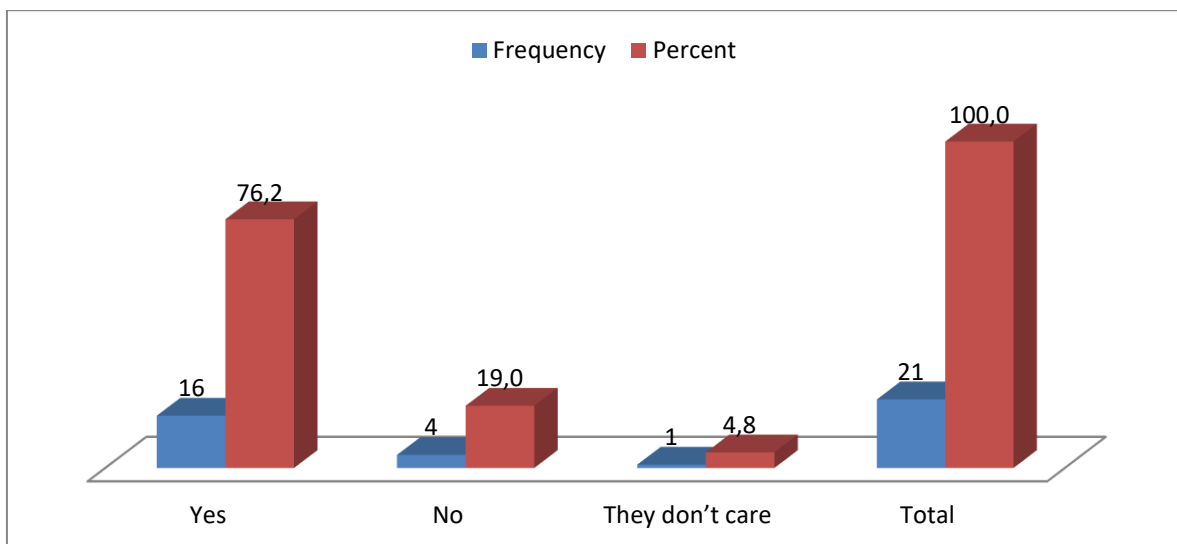
Figure 9 indicates that 76.2 % of learners knew others who had dropped out of school, whilst 19 % disagreed (2018 October). This study continues to reveal that social ills appears as the most influential factor to take

pupils away from school, puberty stage also affects their behavioural ways to an extent that end up doing wrong things such like crime and bullying, (Global Journal on Health Sciences. 2012). According to Glaser (2010), state that the dropout pupils continues to spread this nature of lifestyle or behaviour in order to influence the innocent ones.

The behavioural problems that occur during infancy and adolescence, particularly external problems, such as substance use and violent behaviours, may continue throughout adulthood, and are associated with social non-adaptation, substance abuse, and conflicts. The peer group may, on one hand, serve as a model and influence behaviours and attitudes, whilst on the other hand, it may provide easy access, encouragement, and an appropriate social setting for consumption

Figure 10. Number of drop-out friends
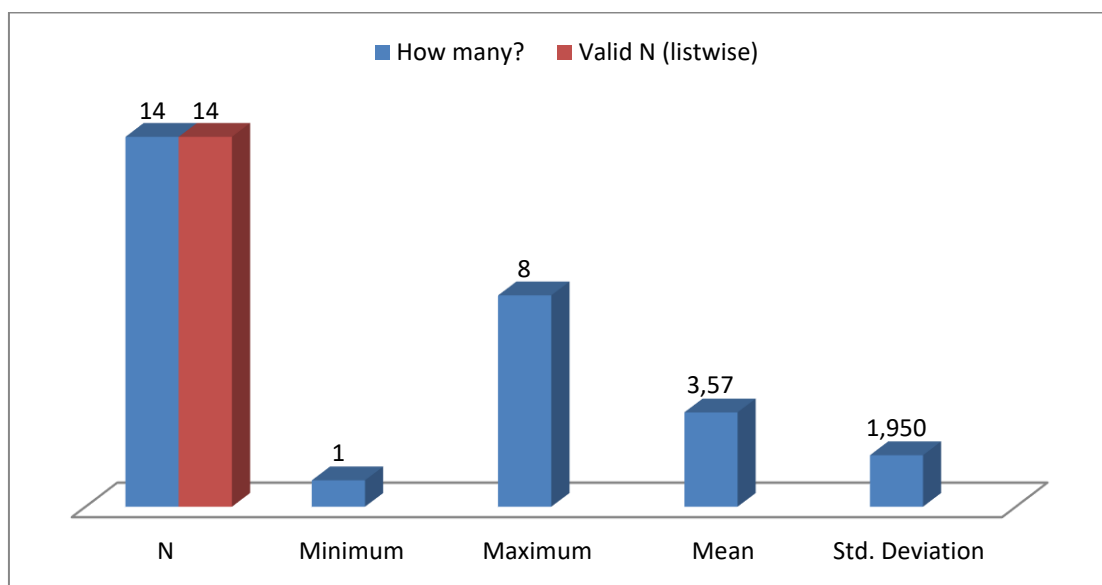
Figure 10 confirms the number of 'friend drop-outs' as per the above statement. According Mafa, *(*2018.12), Southern African Development Community (SADC) region has highlighted a high rate of non-attendance of learners. Furthermore, the report by the Community Agency for Social Enquiry and the Joint Education Trust (2007) highlighted that such a high rate of learner nonattendance compromised the results and quality of education in South Africa. While learners are supposed to be learning they are loitering and being involved in other criminal activities amongst other things like abusing alcohol and other substances.

Figure 11. How would you rate your performance whilst at school; good, average or poor?
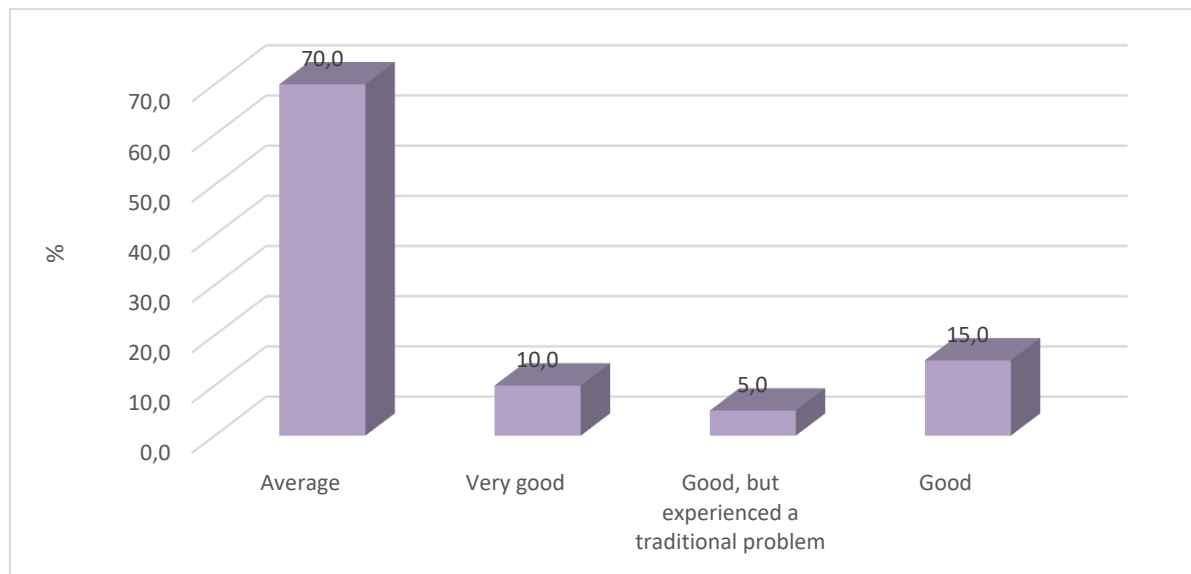
Figure11 shows that 70.0 % regarded themselves as average in school performance, 10 % were 'very good', 5.0 % were good but somehow experienced traditional problems. The issue of dropouts In South Africa has become the countries crises. According the dropouts rate statistics approximately 60 % of the matriculants reaches their graduation time incomplete. According to DOG, only 52 % of the age appropriate population remain enrolled (DOE, 2015). In order to prevent learners from leaving school, better understanding of the phenomenon could assist DOE and other concern groups to determine approaches may be effective in retaining them.

According to the Department of Basic Education (2017), Mathanzima Mweli (DG) asserts that SA school system is being compromised by these high dropout rate and poor results that positioning of the country's education extremely low.

Table 29 below depicts the summary findings of the study

1.Use of retention strategies	School A (private) -monitor progress -implement programme -keep in touch with parents -Extra classes free of charge	School B (public) -No strategies in place	School A (private) -monitor progress -implement program -keep in touch with parents -Extra classes free of charge	School B (public) -Try to cooperate with SGB and parents	School A (private) -If the dropout was poorly academically -No specific program -Whether socially or academically we assigned extra classes or accommodation **School B (public)** -No dropout learner found despite the ones who registered to cheaper schools, due to financial constraints
2. Identify challenges that are confronted	-Failures -Lack of innovation	-No cooperation of parents -No support from DOE Drug abuse -Alcohol -Teenage pregnancy	**School A (private)** -Lot of pressure to educators by DOE -Financial crises to parents **School B (Public)** -high absenteeism -parents don't cooperate -high rate of drug abuse/alcohol -No support from DoE		-Not working -Drug abuse/alcohol -poverty
3. Reduce dropouts	**School A (private)** - Monitor progress throughout the year - Putting programmes in place to assist them academically -Keep in touch with the parents quite regularly - Daily report, report to the parents quite regularly to inform the pertaining their progress		-We work with Lifeline and SANCA to help vulnerable learners -write letter, send messages, call and Conduct home visit and engage wit parents -Send learner to rehabilitation centre and he/she must come back with a letter to allow the learner to school. -Nutrition programme -Those who are doing well at their schoolwork, look at		**School A (private)** - Monitor progress throughout the year -Depends on the matter at hand -Articulate on the issues early -Communicate with parents regularly -Implement programmes **School B (public)**

- Extra classes, maths and science free of charge **School B (public)** -Work with ward councillors for collective effort to encourage learners who have dropped out -Planning to work with religious institutions, our local churches.	giving them a scholarship such as Themba Njilo Foundations, Hulamin etc. 65	-We do home visit; we even have budget for that programme -Lifeline also do home visits -Try and communicate with parents, even though some of them don't cooperate

4.6 Conclusion

From the analysis of this study outlined above, it can be summarized that there are factors that contribute proportionally to learner drop-out rates. The findings also show that, as much as government has undertaken significant improvements in policies and practice in order to reduce the drop-out rate in public school, there is still more to be done in terms of policy implementation, evaluation, and monitoring. It is envisaged that South Africa has good policies in every sector, specifically in education sector, thus what seems to be short is the execution and functionality of structures like SMT, SGB, and parents. However, this will require a strong and collective effort.

The following section produces conclusions, findings, and recommendations based on the information gained from the population and literature.

CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of findings related to the overall aim of the study. A conclusion is reached after an in-depth analysis of the empirical data and the literature review. Data was collected empirically to respond to the assessment of the factors that contribute to drop-out rates. The comparative study was done between two schools, private and public. The location of both schools was in Pietermaritzburg at uMgungundlovu district in KZN.

The specific objectives of this study were to conduct the assessment of the factors that contribute to dropout rate in schools. The researcher did a comparative study between private and public schools to critically understand the influence of social and economic factors.

5.2 Summary of Main Findings: Assessment of the Factors That Contribute to Drop-out Rates: Comparative Study Between Private and Public Schools (Intrinsic and Extrinsic)

Findings of this research study revealed various factors contributing to learner drop-out rates between two schools in the uMgungundlovu district. Findings from the analysed data indicated that the public sector has a high number of drop-out learners. Another aspect that needs to be taken into consideration is the functionality of the (SMT) and (SGB), relating to their structural dysfunctionality, however, that perpetuates or encourages the drop-out rate. On the other side, School B (the private school) has very functional structures that ensure occupation and retention in school. From this study, it is evident that learners and educators need to be supported, motivated, and capacitated to ensure progress with the implementation of the new programmes (curriculum). The school, as an institution established to educate, has a responsibility to support learners who are at risk of dropping out. The phenomenon of young people dropping out of school affects the government, individuals, societies, and the labour market. The effects of dropping out do not only have financial implications, but also social implications. Dropping out of school poses challenges regarding self-sufficiency, self-esteem, and the ability to make educational choices.

The DOE has policies in place which address the phenomenon of learners dropping out of school. These policies should consciously and continuously be monitored to ensure that educators are adequately supported. Teacher-training and continuous in-service training programmes should ensure that educators are exposed to current policies and new skills that can assist them in dealing with learners' social problems in alleviation of this phenomenon.

5.3 Findings Relating to the Literature Review

The study is sharing the impact caused by the factors that contribute to drop-out rates of learners in selected high schools in the uMgungundlovu district. The provision contains by the study it confirms and complement the theories appears in the literature review of this study. This study has established that various factors do contribute to the drop-out rates of learners. The findings continue to show that the contribution of these factors does not only affect them in the school environment, however the external environment also contributes (community and family factors).

The findings have emphasised that social factors contain the great influence in misleading the pupil to dropout school. Here are the social factors that are seemed to have high influence, teenage pregnancy, drug abuse, social ills (Tuberculosis and HIV), peer pressure, and learning barriers. These factors are complex issues which should be executed by competent people (Dekeza-Tsomo, 2012.69). As learners spend a great deal more of their time in the school environment than time at home, the educator has become an important role-player to assist learners in alleviating their social problems. It is essential that learners with social problems must, at an early stage, get professional help. The educators who are, due to circumstances, obliged to help these learners, are not necessarily equipped to give the required assistance.

It is commonly thought that many of these private schools provide a better education than public schools (Valerie Strauss, 2018). There are so many factors that influence learner drop-out rates, however, previous studies indicate that private schools plenty of strategies are in place to ensure that the school and learning environment is conducive, automatically, this will retain learners in school. In this study the researcher manages to assess these factors by conducting an in-depth research study to confirm how effective these factors influence learners' inclination to drop-out.

Teenage pregnancy is one of the most common factors that is affecting female learners in contemplating dropping out. This phenomenon requires very serious attention from the government's perspective and it also requires a collective effort from educators and parents. The SASA (1996), asset that parents and guardians are compelled to ensure that the learners for whom they are responsible must attend school from the first school day of the year in which such a learner reaches the age of seven years until the last school day of the year in which such a learner reaches the age of fifteen years, or the ninth grade, whichever comes first.

According to the Council of Education Ministers, a National Policy for the Prevention and Management of Learner Pregnancy (March 2017) was approved. The policy addresses the high rates of pregnancy among learners, the familial and social context within which this occurs, options for reduction of unintended and

unwanted pregnancies, management of its pre- and postnatal implications, limitation of associated stigma and discrimination, and, importantly, the retention and re-enrolment of affected learners in school.

Another factor that the study found is the high rates of drug and alcohol usage in the public school under study, subsequently the victim's ended up dropping out of school. Most of these dropped out learners are unemployed; they stay home doing nothing because if they look for the jobs their applications get declined since they do not have a matric certificate. The DOE (2013) (Integrated school health programme), alcohol and drug usage has many negative effects on the health and wellbeing of learners. It is linked to academic difficulties, absenteeism, and school drop-out rates. It also leads to other problems such as crime and violence, mental and physical health problems, traffic accidents, and unprotected sex.

Based on the findings, the study shows that there are a high number of learners who is their parents have died due to different sicknesses. Even though the researcher did not go in details to further understand the nature of these sicknesses it shows that most of the parents died through being sick and not accidentally. According to Andrew (2017.05) South Africa is a country which has experienced one of the highest rates of HIV infection and deaths from AIDS in the world. This disease, along with related illnesses such as tuberculosis, has had an impact on families, both in terms of the deaths of breadwinners and parent figures, but also the burden this has placed on young people. HIV/AIDS has placed a burden on children who have been needed not only to care for sick family members, but also to become breadwinners. Orphan-hood is a major risk factor; as Fleisch *et al*. (2009. 44) found, 32 % of children out of school have one or both parents' dead. Children living in child-headed households are also much more likely to be out of school, or drop out of school, than counterparts living with close adult relatives (Fleisch *et al*., 2009.44). Shocks at a family level, such as illness, death, and loss of employment can play a major role in the decision to drop out rates (Branson *et al*., 2013.12).

The practice of learner retention has a huge impact in the drop-out rate. Most of the leaners repeating the same class are older than their classmates and as a result they become ashamed and drop-out. The common grade where learners tend to get stuck in is grade ten, consequently, that is why most of the learners drop out in grade ten. Struggling learners in schools which perform poorly in the NSC are at a much higher risk of dropping out than struggling learners in schools which perform better (Branson *et al*., 2013.17) and it has been found that poor quality education after grade nine is a particularly important causal factor in drop-out among senior secondary school learners (Andrew *et al*, 2017.08). Indeed, "By grade nine, learners in poor (mostly black) schools, have a [learning] backlog of approximately 3.5 years relative to their rich school counterparts" (Moses *et al*., 2017.3).

Pressure on schools to perform well in their NSCs also contributes greatly to pushing learners out of school in grades 10 and 11. A 2001 DOE directive setting national pass rate targets resulted in many struggling schools simply culling or weeding weaker learners out before they reached matric, either by retaining them in lower

grades for multiple years (Branson *et al*., 2013.4) or by pressurising them in other ways to leave prior to grade 12 (Dieltiens and Meny-Gibert, 2009.49).

Late coming and absenteeism has been found to be predictors of the learner drop-out rate, however this starts small and gets bigger. In most cases the learner will start by coming to school late and then begin to bunk classes (partial absenteeism). At later stages, the learner begins to attend twice or thrice a week and, subsequently, the learner drops-out of the school. According to Mafa (2018.09), absenteeism is defined as the failure by a pupil to regularly attend school during agreed times or participate in a meaningful manner in his or her planned education programme. Chronic non-attendance is described as a situation where a pupil is absent for 10 days or more per term. Chronic absenteeism means missing ten % of a school year for any reason. Truancy is also regarded as absenteeism. This describes a situation where learners deliberately arrive late to school, bunk classes, or leave the school premises during school hours without permission (Wittenberg, 2005). Absenteeism is generalised, with researchers categorising absenteeism as school non-attendance, disaffection, school refusal, or school phobia. These are the consequences of a lack of management of learner attendance. The Policy on Learner Attendance, effective from 1 January 2011, is compulsory for implementation by all Public Schools (Department of Basic Education, 2010). This policy seeks to promote punctual and regular attendance at public schools and sets out procedures for managing and monitoring learner attendance, including throughout examination periods. The national policy on learner attendance states that class registers must be used as official records of learner attendance and absence. Registers must be used to monitor the attendance of learners at schools (Department of Basic Education, 2010). Schools must promote punctual and regular school attendance and provide standardised procedures for recording and monitoring learner attendance (DOE, 2007). Learners, however, seem to be absent from schools despite the fact the policy requires that the principal manages their attendance (South African Schools Act, 1996). The policy states that the principal can delegate the management of learner attendance to his/her deputies and Head of Departments (HODs).

The functionality of the School Management Team (SMT) is supposed to play a huge role in terms of ensuring that learners and the school environment is conducive, which should be done through policy implementation, programmes and monitoring and evaluation. The data also revealed that SMTs focused on control rather than on devising strategies to combat learner attendance (Mafa, 2018.07). The School Management Team (SMT) is assumed to perform all of the management tasks of the school, including monitoring learner attendance and promoting a culture of teaching and learning. Though the national policy states that the principal can delegate the task of managing learner attendance, it does not specify how SMTs must manage learners' attendance other than by controlling classes and completing the period registers. Furthermore, there seems to be no provincial policy on how the schools themselves should manage learner attendance (Mafa, 2018.09).

Based on the national learner attendance policy, schools are expected to develop their own policies on learner attendance (DOE, 2010). "SMTs should share the overall responsibility for monitoring teaching and learning with the Principals and where they operate successfully, they have great potential to improve classroom practice through HODs sharing their ideas, developing school-wide policies and enacting consistent practice throughout the school" (Bush *et al.*, 2009). Although SMTs are tasked to manage schools, it seems as though there is a problem with their management of learner attendance as there is a serious problem of learner absenteeism South African (Bush *et al.*, 2009).

5.4. Conclusions

The findings of the study concluded the following:

- **Examine the use of retention strategies in schools to avoid learners dropping out of school**

Based on the research findings, school A (public school) shows that there is a low level of effort that is executed from the School Management Team (SMT) and School Governing Body (SGB). The study also found that new elected structures are clueless as no workshop has been done to equip them with knowledge and the necessary skills.

- **Identify the challenges that are confronted by the education department in terms of ensuring that learners remain and complete their schooling**

The following factors were predominantly:

  o Drug abuse

  o Alcohol

  o Teenage pregnancy

- **Recommended strategies and methods to retain pupils and reduce drop-out rates of learners in schools**

International and previous studies indicate that South African literature on school drop-out consist of a number of recommendations regarding how school drop-out should ideally be reduced or articulated. It has been pointed out (Andrew 2017) that interventions can be aimed at systemic changes (e.g. to the school system, or social welfare system) or be programmatic, in that they try to effect change at family or individual level. As far as government efforts are concerned, the consensus in literature is that, "Any policy decision of relevance must necessarily focus on the whole aggregate of factors at the level of pupils, families, schools and the broader environment…there is neither a single or simple solution to be found" (De Witte *et al*. 2013.15). In other words, both systemic and programmatic interventions are significant, and these must address structural, social, and academic reasons for dropping out.

According to George Washington University's Centre for Equity and Excellence in Education (GW-CEEE) (2012.8), it is argued that there is a need for multi-level tiered interventions which include learners, teachers, peers, families, and government agencies, to be effective. They point out (ibid.) that an "integrated approach to keeping pupils in schools [should replace] a collaborative of independent programs that often allow pupils to fall through cracks, or even work at cross-purposes with one another in a fragmented, ineffective manner". Furthermore, as (Andrew, 2017.12) points out, programmes aimed at addressing drop-out must be evidence-based – designed based on evidence about the problem and its specific context and gathering evidence on impacts on an ongoing basis.

The following strategies and methods to tackling drop-out rates are recommended in the literature:

Working with learners who display high-risk and anti-social behaviours, such as aggression, disruption, bullying, drug and alcohol taking, sexual activity, and carrying of weapons is also an important prevention measure. Active and strong school counselling services, peer education, and drop-out prevention taskforces are the recommended approaches for addressing such behaviour in a way which does not drive troubled learners out, but rehabilitates them (Dockery, N.D.19).

In South African public schools, state social workers are available, but generally they must divide their time between all the schools in a circuit, often 20 to 30 schools. School leaders and teachers are thus left with the main task of dealing with troubled learners, a task they often lack the time and skills to perform effectively. Organisations, such as Ikamva Youth, are assisting to address behavioural problems in schools through a peer-to-peer model (Spaull, 2015.39), while Love Life and other NGOs similarly work with youth to encourage positive behaviours and identity formation tactics. This approach can also assist to reduce the number of learners who drop out of school because of the minor social ills.

Developing the social skills of young people is another crucial aspect in drop-out prevention, including communication skills, problem solving, emotional intelligence, goal setting, conflict resolution, peer resistance, and appropriate behaviours. As De Witte *et al*. (2013.15) points out, facilitating social attachment among learners, especially in key transitions periods, is important. It has been pointed out by Spaull (2015.39) that life skills training around teenage sex and pregnancy are crucial to stem the prevailing problem of dropouts caused by teenage pregnancy and childbirth. Equally important are programmes which encourage learners to develop a positive view of their prospects, and what they must do to achieve realistic goals.

If South Africa wishes to address the fact that only 40 % of learners who start school in grade one leave school with a National Senior Certificate, much must be done to address problems in the schooling system, and within communities, families, and individual learners. There is also currently no national drop-out prevention strategy. Drawing up such a strategy is clearly the first business that a drop-out prevention taskforce must undertake.

5.5. Recommendation from the Study

The findings of the study indicate concisely that public schools need in-depth support from variety of stakeholders and relevant groups to keep them in a good state of teaching and learning. The headmaster and educators alone cannot be able to fight against this phenomenon if education department is not calling for support to other social groups, the school was established to provide education to pupils and also teachers are trained for that specific task. The dropping out of pupils is not only adding on the dropout rate but also increasing the number of uneducated people in the country and it also affect the economy. As the technology advances it requires the high level of educated and skilled people, if dropout continues it create an impression high level of poverty, crime and homeless people.

The DOE has policies in place, which seek to address the phenomenon of learner dropping outs of school. These policies need to be monitored closely and sustainability need to be considered. According to the 2019/2020 budget allocation, the department of education received the biggest cut of KZN budget. This indicate that education is priorities in KZN, but the problem is the implementation and monitoring process are not taken into consideration.

- Rather than relying solely on national policy, it is recommended that clear SMT policies for managing learner non-attendance be developed and communicated to all school stakeholders. The policy should clearly specify the roles of each stakeholder in managing learner non-attendance at school.
- In public school's lack parental involvement has been noted as one of the causes of learner non-attendance as a common symbol of dropouts. SMTs and SBG should therefore strive to hold meetings where learners' parents are asked to attend so that they can see how schooling is beneficial to their children.
- Development of programmes that will address these issues, such as involvement in sport, and art could reduce the high level of exposure and vulnerability.
- SMT and SBG need to collectively conduct thorough research and follow up of the pupil who seem to be struggling in attending school. That could assist to diagnose the source of problem the pupil is facing with.
- Learner dropout is not only a school problem, but it involves every stakeholder such as faith base organisation, civil society organisation and ward councillor of that area or ward to address these factors together with the society (parents).
- Proactive measures should be taken into consideration in order to avoid learner dropout, for example: Continuous moderation and assessment should be also emphasised to ensure that there are steps and measures which are taken to mitigate problems.

- Active and strong school counselling services, peer education, and dropout prevention taskforces (SMT and SGB) are recommended approaches for addressing such behaviour in a way which does not drive troubled learners out but rehabilitates them.

- School bullying prevention programmes and counselling for bad behaviour rather than expulsion.

- A DOE directive is seeking to limit retention by restricting schools from keeping struggling learners back for more than one year in any three-year phase. This should help to reduce the practice of weeding, but more needs to be done to ensure children start school at the correct age and keep up with their age cohort throughout their school journey.

- There is also a need for vastly improving school structures and systems, enabling school-wide reform to enhance pupils by creating a caring environment, a culture of support, a good school vibe, high expectations, a strong connection to post school options, and, a cohesive, learners-centred learning environment in which there is a positive relationship between learners and teachers.

- It is recommended, should track several indicators over time relating to learner attendance, grade retention, academic performance, social engagement and behaviour, and data must be up-to-date and easily accessible.

- Recommended interventions are one-on-one and small group tutoring; after school programmes and homework support; and catch up programmes for learners who are falling behind more attention to maths and science.

- As the results of the study shows, drop-out rates are as much about social, psychological, and relational factors as they are about learning deficits. The provision of psychosocial support (PSS) is recommended.

- It has been pointed out by related literature that life skills training around teenage sex and pregnancy is crucial to stem the prevailing problem of dropouts caused by teenage pregnancy and childbirth.

- Targeting high risk behaviours is recommended. Working with learners who display high-risk and anti-social behaviours, such as aggression, disruption, bullying, drug and alcohol taking, and sexual activity, is also an important prevention measure.

- Family interventions that build strong connections to learner's families are also a crucial aspect of dropout prevention and reintegration strategies since the involvement of parents is imperative.

- Re-engagement and reintegration are important. As much as dropout prevention is important, finding ways to re-engage and reintegrate those who have already dropped out is also crucial, especially since their life and career prospects without a school-leavers certificate have been shown to be inadequate.

5.6. Conclusion

Through the research conducted by the researcher regarding the factors contributes to pupils within and outside the school premises. The target of the study was directly focusing on the uMgungundlovu district schools which was the comparative study between public and private school. The assessment of the study was to distinguish the nature and degree of these factors for both schools. The results of the study confirm the description of the theories reflecting in the literature review of this study. This study has established that various factors do indeed contribute to the drop-out rate of learners. The results of the study give the clear picture of these respective factors, public school is more affected by these factors such as social ills and other specified factors in the study. The dropout rate seems to be extremely high in public school compared to private school. Regarding the dropout rate affecting private school was not concise despite the pupil who leave private school to public school due to financial predicaments.

This comparative analysis is intended to provide cases where each case findings will provide lessons to public schools on how to strengthen 'public value and public good 'in basic education. Public value is an important aspect of the foundations of public administration. This study demonstrated that these factors contributing to drop-out are more dominant in public schools, educators are also prone to these serious challenges that affect their leaners since they are part of the education system and some come from similar backgrounds. They sometimes become subjective to the decision-making since they intend to assist leaners by providing assistance to these affected pupils which is not an easy task since educators are only trained to be teacher not to deal with social issues. This study provided recommendation, since the phenomenon of drop-outs requires a multisectoral approach to deal with it in ensuring that these factors are taken into consideration to avoid prevalence for those who are still in primary schools. Based on the findings of this study, other school teachers and learners can learn from this study since it indicate that most of the pupil affected by socio-economic factors can turn to dropout school.

5.7. Future research

There is an opportunity for conducting future research that can focus on identifying discrepancies and dysfunctionality of the SGB and SMT to enhance and nourish good governance for public good.

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Appendix A: Consent Form

CONSENT

Statement of agreement to participate in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Mlungisi Majozi about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study;

- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (participant letter of information) regarding the study;

- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report;

- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that data collected during the study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher;

- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the study;

- I have had enough opportunity to ask questions and (of my free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study; and

I understand that significant new findings developed during the course of this research, which may relate to my participation, will be made available to me.

Full Name of Participant	**Date**	**Time**	**Signature / Right**
			Thumbprint

I, Mlungisi Majozi herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct risks of the above study.

Full Name of Researcher   **Date**   **Signature**

Full Name of Witness (If applicable)   **Date**   **Signature**

Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable) Date   **Signature**

Appendix B: Letter of Information

LETTER OF INFORMATION

Title of the study:

A comparative study of the reasons for the drop-out rate of high school pupils in KwaZulu-Natal: A case study of public and private schools.

Principal Investigator/s/researcher:

Mlungisi Majozi - BTech, Public Management

Co-Investigator/s/supervisor/s:

Ms N Matsiliza

Brief Introduction and Purpose of the Study:

This study focuses on the drop-out rate of pupils in high schools especially between grades 10-12. The study will be a comparative study between private and public schools in the uMgungundlovu district. It focuses on the factors that contribute to the drop-out of learners. It is often argued that private schools perform better than public schools. Common opinion is that public schooling, especially in South Africa, has a long way to go in terms of keeping up with private school education. Based on the factors/challenges that are clearly defined in the following pages, poor performance from a learner for example contributes to a loss of concentration or passion about school.

The aim of this study is to investigate the factors and challenges that face pupils and educators in both public and private schooling within the uMgungundlovu District.

Outline of the Procedures:

A structured questionnaire will be used to collect information from respondents selected for the study. These questionnaires will be self-administered and distributed to the random selected members comprising of learners, educators and members of the School Governing Body (SGB). Interviews will be conducted with selected officials from the DOE, the

headmasters from both schools, as well as drop outs from the public and private schools.

Risks or Discomforts to the Participant:

The study and data collection procedures do not pose any risks to the respondents.

Benefits:

Respondents will be aware of the factors/challenges that face pupils
and educators in both public and private schooling

Reason/s why the Participant May Be Withdrawn from the Study:

Participation is voluntary and there are no adverse consequences should a respondent withdraw from the study.

Remuneration:

There will be no remuneration for respondents.

Costs of the Study:

None to the respondents.

Confidentiality:

The respondent reserves the right to remain anonymous.

Research-related Injury:

No injuries can be sustained through the process of data collection.

Persons to Contact in the Event of Any Problems or Queries:

Please contact the researcher, Mlungisi Majozi (0732316461), my supervisor, Dr. M Brauns

(033 845 8893).

General

Potential participants must be assured that participation is voluntary and the approximate number of participants to be included should be disclosed. A copy of the information letter should be issued to participants. The information letter and consent form must be translated and provided in the primary spoken language of the research population e.g. isiZulu.

APPENDIX C

<div align="right">

Imbali stage 1

Mnqayi road

995

Pietermaritzburg

3201

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Grace College

2 Hilton college road Hilton

3245 Pietermaritzburg 3201

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH THE HEADMASTER REGARDING A RESEARCH STUDY ON THE DROP-OUT RATE OF HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS IN KWAZULU-NATAL, WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO GRACE COLLEGE

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Mlungisi Majozi, a student at Durban University Technology (Midlands Campus) studying towards a master's degree in Public Management. I am conducting a research study on the drop-out rate of high school pupils in KwaZulu-Natal, with specific reference to Grace College, in the uMgungundlovu District (PMB).

The study entails a comparative analysis of the dropout rate in public and private schools, namely Ikusaselihle Secondary School and Grace College. The aim of this study is to investigate the factors and challenges that face pupils and educators in both public and private schooling within the uMgungundlovu District.

With reference to the above, I hereby request permission from the headmaster of the respective schools to conduct a research study with educators, pupils, the headmaster

and the governing body of the school. Headmaster, educators and members of the governing body will participate in the interview process whilst pupils will fill in the questionnaire. This forms part of the data collection process to gain in-depth theories and overall perspective of pupils and educators from Grace College based on their experience and knowledge of school drop-out rates.

For further clarity and information, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Name: Mlungisi Majozi (Mr.) Master's
degree student

E-mail: mlooh.duma@gmail.com

Contact number: 0732316461

Supervisor:Ms. N. Matsiliza

E-mail:

NoluthandoM1@dut.ac.

za

Contact number: 033 – 8458893

Yours sincerely,

Mlungisi Majozi

Imbali stage 1

Mnqayi   road

995

Pietermaritzburg

3201

Ikusaselihle Secondary School

1532 Unit 5

Imbali

Pietermaritzburg

3201

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH THE HEADMASTER REGARDING A RESEARCH STUDY ON THE DROP-OUT RATE OF HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS IN KWAZULU-NATAL, WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO IKUSASELIHLE SECONDARY SCHOOL

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Mlungisi Majozi, a pupil at Durban University Technology (Midlands Campus) studying towards a master's degree in Public Management. I am conducting a research study on the drop-out rate of high school pupils in KwaZulu-Natal, with specific reference to Ikusaselihle Secondary School, in the uMgungundlovu District (Pietermaritzburg).

The study entails a comparative analysis of the dropout rate in public and private schools, namely Ikusaselihle Secondary School and Grace College. The aim of this study is to investigate the factors and challenges that face pupils and educators in both public and private schooling within the uMgungundlovu District.

With reference to the above, I hereby request permission from the headmaster of the respective schools to conduct a research study with educators, pupils, the headmaster and the governing body of the school. Headmaster, educators and members of the

governing body will participate in the interview process whilst pupils will fill in the questionnaire. This forms part of the data collection process to gain in-depth theories and overall perspective of pupils and educators from Ikusaselihle Secondary School based on their experience and knowledge of school drop-out rates.

For further clarity and information, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Name: Mlungisi Majozi (Mr.) Master's
degree student

E-mail: mlooh.duma@gmail.com
Contact number: 0732316461

Supervisor:Ms.N.
Matsiliza:E-mail:
NoluthandoM1@dut.ac.
za
Contact number: 033 – 8458893

Yours sincerely,

Mlungisi Majozi

Imbali   stage
1Mnqayi road
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Pietermaritzburg
3201

Grace College
2 Hilton college road
Hilton 3245
Pietermaritzburg 3201

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH THE GOVERNING BODY OF GRACE COLLEGE REGARDING A RESEARCH STUDY ON THE DROP-OUT RATE OF HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS IN KWAZULU-NATAL

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Mlungisi Majozi, a student at Durban University Technology (Midlands Campus) studying towards a master's degree in Public Management. I am conducting a research study on the drop-out rate of high school pupils in KwaZulu-Natal, with specific reference to Grace College, in the uMgungundlovu District (Pietermaritzburg).

The study entails a comparative analysis of the dropout rate in public and private schools namely Ikusaselihle Secondary School and Grace College. The aim of this study is to investigate the factors and challenges that face pupils and educators in both public and private schooling within the uMgungundlovu District.

With reference to the above, I hereby request permission to conduct interviews with the Governing Body of Grace College concerning the drop-out rate of pupils.

For further clarity and information, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Name:Mlungisi Majozi (Mr.) Master's degree
student
E-mail: mlooh.duma@gmail.com
Contact number: 0732316461

Supervisor: Prof: N Matsiliza
E-mail: NoluthandoM1@dut.ac.za
Contact number: 033 – 8458893

Yours sincerely,

Mlungisi Majozi

Imbali stage 1

Mnqayi road

995

Pietermaritzburg

3201

Ikusaselihle High School
1532 Unit 5
Imbali
Pietermaritzburg
3201

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH THE GOVERNING BODY OF IKUSASELIHLE SECONDARY SCHOOL REGARDING A RESEARCH STUDY ON THE DROP-OUT RATE OF HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS IN KWAZULU-NATAL

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Mlungisi Majozi, a student at Durban University Technology (Midlands Campus) studying towards a master's degree in Public Management. I am conducting a research study on the drop-out rate of high school pupils in KwaZulu-Natal with specific reference to Ikusaselihle Secondary School in the uMgungundlovu District (Pietermaritzburg).

The study entails a comparative analysis of the dropout rate in public and private schools, namely Ikusaselihle Secondary School and Grace College. The aim of this study is to investigate the factors and challenges that face pupils and educators in both public and private schooling within the uMgungundlovu District.

With reference to the above, I hereby request permission to conduct interviews with the Governing Body of Ikusaselihle Secondary School concerning the drop-out rate of pupils.

For further clarity and information, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Name: Mlungisi Majozi (Mr.) master's degree
student
E-mail: mlooh.duma@gmail.com
Contact number: 0732316461

Supervisor: Prof: N Matsiliza
E-mail: NoluthandoM1@dut.ac.za
Contact number: 033 – 8458893

Yours sincerely,

Mlungisi Majozi

Imbali stage 1

Mnqayi road

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Pietermaritzburg

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Grace College

2 Hilton college road

Hilton 3245

Pietermaritzburg 3201

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH EDUCATORS OF GRACE COLLEGE REGARDING A RESEARCH STUDY ON THE DROP-OUT RATE OF HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS IN KWAZULU-NATAL

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Mlungisi Majozi, a pupil at Durban University Technology (Midlands Campus) studying towards a master's degree in Public Management. I am conducting a research study on the drop-out rate of high school pupils in KwaZulu-Natal with specific reference to Grace College in the uMgungundlovu District (Pietermaritzburg).

The study entails a comparative analysis of the dropout rate in public and private schools namely Ikusaselihle Secondary School and Grace College. The aim of this study is to investigate the factors and challenges that face pupils and educators in both public and private schooling within the uMgungundlovu District.

With reference to the above, I hereby request permission from educators at Grace College to conduct interviews concerning the drop-out rate of pupils.

For further clarity and information, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Name: Mlungisi Majozi (Mr.) master's degree
student
E-mail: mlooh.duma@gmail.com
Contact number: 0732316461

Supervisor: Prof: N Matsiliza
E-mail: NoluthandoM1@dut.ac.za
Contact number: 033 – 8458893

Yours sincerely,

Mlungisi Majozi

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Mnqayi road

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Ikusaselihle High School
1532 Unit 5
Imbali
Pietermaritzburg
3201

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH EDUCATORS OF IKUSASELIHLE SECONDARY SCHOOL REGARDING A RESEARCH STUDY ON THE DROP-OUT RATE OF HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS IN KWAZULU-NATAL

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Mlungisi Majozi, a student at Durban University Technology (Midlands Campus) studying towards a master's degree in Public Management. I am conducting a research study on the drop-out rate of high school pupils in KwaZulu-Natal, with specific reference to Ikusaselihle Secondary School in the uMgungundlovu District (Pietermaritzburg).

The study entails a comparative analysis of the dropout rate in public and private schools, namely Ikusaselihle Secondary School and Grace College. The aim of this study is to investigate the factors and challenges that face pupils and educators in both public and private schooling within the uMgungundlovu District.

With reference to the above, I hereby request permission from educators at Ikusaselihle Secondary School to conduct interviews concerning the drop-out rate of pupils.

For further clarity and information, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Name: Mlungisi Majozi (Mr.) master's degree
student
E-mail: mlooh.duma@gmail.com
Contact number: 0732316461

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Yours sincerely,

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Pietermaritzburg 3201

<u>REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH PUPILS AT GRACE COLLEGE REGARDING A RESEARCH STUDY ON THE DROP-OUT RATE OF HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS IN KWAZULU-NATAL</u>

Dear Pupil

My name is Mlungisi Majozi, a student at Durban University Technology (Midlands Campus) studying towards a master's degree in Public Management. I am conducting a research study on the drop-out rate of high school pupils in KwaZulu-Natal, with specific reference to Grace College in the uMgungundlovu District (Pietermaritzburg).

The study entails a comparative analysis of the dropout rate in public and private schools namely Ikusaselihle Secondary School and Grace College. The aim of this study is to investigate the factors and challenges that face pupils and educators in both public and private schooling within the uMgungundlovu District.

With reference to the above, I hereby request permission from you, a pupil of Grace College, to conduct interviews concerning the drop-out rate of pupils.

Yes, I agree   No, I do not agree

☐   ☐

For further clarity and information, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Name: Mlungisi Majozi (Mr.) Master's
degree student
 E-mail: mlooh.duma@gmail.com
Contact number: 0732316461

Supervisor: Prof: N Matsiliza
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Ikusaselihle High School
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Pietermaritzburg
3201

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS WITH PUPILS AT IKUSASELIHLE SECONDARY SCHOOL REGARDING A RESEARCH STUDY ON THE DROP-OUT RATE OF HIGH SCHOOL PUPILS IN KWAZULU-NATAL

Dear Pupil

My name is Mlungisi Majozi, a student at Durban University Technology (Midlands Campus) studying towards a master's degree in Public Management. I am conducting a research study on the drop-out rate of high school pupils in KwaZulu-Natal, with specific reference to Ikusaselihle Secondary School in the uMgungundlovu District (Pietermaritzburg).

The study entails a comparative analysis of the dropout rate in public and private schools namely Ikusaselihle Secondary School and Grace College. The aim of this study is to investigate the factors and challenges that face pupils and educators in both public and private schooling within the uMgungundlovu District.

With reference to the above, I hereby request permission from you, a pupil of Ikusaselihle Secondary School, to conduct interviews concerning the drop-out rate of pupils.

Yes, I agree	No, I do not agree

For further clarity and information, please do not hesitate to contact me:

Name: Mlungisi Majozi (Mr.) Masters degree
student
E-mail: mlooh.duma@gmail.com
Contact number: 0732316461

Supervisor: Prof: N Matsiliza
E-mail: NoluthandoM1@dut.ac.za
Contact number: 033 – 8458893

Yours sincerely,

Mlungisi Majozi

QUESTIONNAIRE

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION – HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS

Please provide the following information by placing an X in the appropriate block.

1. Gender

a. Male	
b. Female	
c. Other	

2. Race

a. White	
b. Black	
c. Asian	
d. Coloured	

3. Age

a. 14-15	
b. 16-17	
c. 18-19	
d. 20-21	
e. Above 21	

4. How many years have you been in this school?

a. 5 years	
b. 4 years	
c. 3 years	
d. 2 years	
e. Or other year (specify)	

5. In which year was your first registration in this school?

a. 2010	
b. 2011	
c. 2012	
d. 2013	
e. 2014	
f. 2015	
g. other year (specify)	

6. Are you aware of any dropouts in your grade and if so, what are the numbers?

a. 10	
b. 5	
c. 2	
d. 0	
e. other number (specify)	

SECTION B – HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS

Below are the common factors that could cause learners to drop out of school.

Please indicate to which extent these statements are <u>true</u> or <u>false</u>, by circling the appropriate number.

		Definitely true	Possibly true	Do not know	Most likely false	Definitely false
a.	Teenage pregnancy is a factor that causes girls to drop-out of school.	5	4	3	2	1
b.	Substance abuse is mostly used by boys and is a common cause for dropping out of school.	5	4	3	2	1
c.	Scholar transport is an important tool in reducing the number of learners who are dropping out the school.	5	4	3	2	1
d.	The performance and success of a learner is determined by the support the learner is getting from home, either financially or socially.	5	4	3	2	1
e.	Learners who come from poor backgrounds compared to those who come from privileged backgrounds tend to drop-out of school.	5	4	3	2	1
f.	Lateness and absenteeism are factors that could result in a learner dropping out of school.	5	4	3	2	1
g.	Repeating the same class several times could result in the learner losing					

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	interest in attending school and thus drop out.	5	4	3	2	1
h.	School management is playing a huge role in addressing the issue of drop- outs at the school.	5	4	3	2	1

SECTION C – HIGH SCHOOL LEARNERS

Below are six questions regarding the drop-out rate of learners?

Please answer the following questions, by circling the appropriate number.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a.	A disadvantaged background contributes to learner drop-out.	5	4	3	2	1
b.	Grade 10 is the common grade where drop outs mostly occur.	5	4	3	2	1
c.	Repeating the same class several times might lead the learner to contemplate dropping out.	5	4	3	2	1
d.	Boys are more often the victims of drug abuse as compared to girls.	5	4	3	2	1
e.	Teenage pregnancy is a problem that needs to be addressed by the school management together with parents.	5	4	3	2	1
f.	Peer pressure in most instances has a negative influence on learners.	5	4	3	2	1

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION – HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATORS

Please provide the following information by placing an X in the appropriate block.

1. Gender

a. Male	
b. Female	
c. Other	

2. Race

a. White	
b. Black	
c. Asian	
d. Coloured	

3. Age

a. 21-30	
b. 30-40	
c. 40-50	
d. 50-60	
e. more than 60 years	

4. How many years have you been employed at this school?

a. 5 years	
b. 4 years	
c. 3 years	
d. 2 years	
e. Or other year (specify)	

5. What is the teacher/learner ratio per class?

a. 1:25	
b. 1:35	
c. 1:40	
d. 1:45	
e. other number (specify)	

SECTION B- HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATORS

Below are the common factors and challenges that educators are faced with during teaching and learning periods. These factors might be the common causes for learners contemplating dropping out of school.

Please indicate to which extent these statements are <u>true </u>or <u>false</u>, by circling the appropriate number.

		Definitely true	Possibly true	Do not know	Most likely false	False
	Teenage pregnancy is one of the factors that cause girls to drop-out of school.	5	4	3	2	1
	In your experience, is alcohol and drug abuse one of the contributing factors that lead to learner drop-out?	5	4	3	2	1
	Scholar transport is the most important tool to reduce the number of learners who are dropping out the school due to the long distances they walk.	5	4	3	2	1
	The performance and success of a child or learner is determined by the support the learner is getting from home, either financially or socially.	5	4	3	2	1
	Learners who come from poor backgrounds compared to those who come from privileged backgrounds tend to drop-out more often.	5	4	3	2	1
	Lateness and absenteeism are some of the issues that could result in a learner dropping out of school.	5	4	3	2	1
	Repeating the same class several times could result in the learner losing interest in attending school.	5	4	3	2	1
	School management is playing a huge role in addressing the issue of dropping out at the school.	5	4	3	2	1

		5	4	3	2	1
	Scholar transport assists in learners arriving on time at school.	5	4	3	2	1
J	During winter there is noticeably more learners absent which could result in eventual drop-out of learners.	5	4	3	2	1
K	The correct punishment is meted out to those learners who are caught taking drugs or alcohol at school.	5	4	3	2	1
l.	Teachers play a crucial role in preventing learners from dropping out of school.	5	4	3	2	1
m.	Teachers play a crucial role in encouraging learners who have dropped out to return to school.	5	4	3	2	1

SECTION C – HIGH SCHOOLS EDUCATORS

Below are seven questions regarding the drop-out rate of pupils?

Please answer the following questions, by circling the appropriate number

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a.	A disadvantaged background contributes to learner drop-out.	5	4	3	2	1
b.	Grade 10 is the common grade where drop-outs mostly occur.	5	4	3	2	1
c.	Repeating the same class several times might lead the learner to contemplate dropping out.	5	4	3	2	1
d.	Boys are more often the victims of drug abuse as compared to girls.	5	4	3	2	1
e.	Teenage pregnancy is a problem that needs to be addressed by the school management together with parents.	5	4	3	2	1
f.	Peer pressure in most instances has a negative influence on learners.	5	4	3	2	1
g.	Grade 10, 11 and 12 learners are mostly affected by the issue of drop-out rate compared to other grades.	5	4	3	2	1

SECTION A

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION – DOE OFFICIALS

Please provide the following information by placing an X in the appropriate block.

1. Gender

a. Male	
b. Female	
c. Other	

2. Race

a. White	
b. Black	
c. Asian	
d. Coloured	

3. Age

a. 20-30	
b. 30-40	
c. 40-50	
d.50-60	
e. More than 60 years	

4. How many years you have been employed in this department?

a. 5 years	
b. 4 years	
c. 3 years	
d. 2 years	
e. Or other year (specify)	

5. Per class (grade 10, 11 and 12) what is the average number of learners who normally drop-out of school?

a. 30	
b. 20	
c. 10	
d. 5	
e. other number (specify)	

SECTION B – DOE OFFICIALS

Below are the common factors and challenges that could result in the learner dropping out of school? Based on the perspective of the DOE Officials:

Please indicate to which extent these statements are <u>true</u> or <u>false</u>, by circling the appropriate number

		Definitely true	Possibly true	Do not know	Most likely false	Definitely false
a.	The department has formulated and implemented new programmes to address the issue of the drop-out rate in schools.	5	4	3	2	1
b.	The department is aware of the factors/challenges that contribute to the drop-out rate of learners.	5	4	3	2	1
c.	Due to long distances that learners walk to school, scholar transport is an important tool that reduces the number of learners who are dropping out of school.	5	4	3	2	1
d.	The performance and success of a learner is determined by the support the learner is getting from home, either financially or socially.	5	4	3	2	1
e.	The department has increased its spending by employing skilled and competent educators in order to reduce the overload from existing teachers.	5	4	3	2	1
f.	The department has a high number of reports whereby educators are still harassing pupils and using corporal punishment.	5	4	3	2	1
g.	The department has programmes in place that assist those learners who have dropped out of school.	5	4	3	2	1

h.	The department has a relationship with other Civil Society Organizations such as non-profit organizations, non-governmental organizations and community-based organisations etc. that address the issue of dropping out.	5	4	3	2	1
i.	The department is yielding good results in terms of addressing the issue of drop-out rate.	5	4	3	2	1

SECTION C – DOE OFFICIALS

The views of DOE officials regarding drop-out rate in are important.

Please answer the following questions, by circling the appropriate number

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a.	High numbers in the drop-out rate contribute to social factors such crime, poverty and unskilled people.	5	4	3	2	1
b.	More revenue (budget) should be made available for education in an endeavour to employ more teachers and thus strengthen the education system.	5	4	3	2	1
c.	As much as government has the responsibility to ensure that every child attends school, it is also the duty of the parents to ensure that their children attend school daily.	5	4	3	2	1
d.	Programmes such as sports, arts and culture influence the learners by keeping them active, occupied and motivated.	5	4	3	2	1
e.	As every child comes from a particular community, the community plays a key role in addressing the issue of learners who are dropping out the school.	5	4	3	2	1
f.	Drugs and alcohol are common factors/challenges that contribute to learner drop-out.	5	4	3	2	1
g.	It is the responsibility of the community to report those people who are selling or giving learners drugs and alcohol.	5	4	3	2	1

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A:

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION – HEADMASTER

Please provide the following information by placing an X in the appropriate block.

1. Gender

a. Male	
b. Female	
c. Other	

2. Race

a. White	
b. Black	
c. Asian	
d. Coloured	

3. Age

a. Less than 25 years old	
b. 26 years – 35 years	
c. 36 years – 55 years	
d. Over 55 years of age	

SECTION B – HEADMASTER

4. How many years you have been a principal of this school?

5. In which grade are learners allowed to follow their career choices?

6. Looking at the year as a whole, in which term do you experience learner drop-out the most?

7. Based on your experience, after how many days of absenteeism leads to a learner drop-out?

9. Can you elaborate on the measures taken to deal with learners who are caught using drugs in the school?

10. What measures do you take to deal with pregnant girls?

11. What does the school do to prevent learner drop-outs?

12. How do you support the learners who are orphans, but are doing well in their studies?

13. What could be the possible causes of early learner drop-out at school, especially in grade 10, 11 and 12?

14. What contribution can the school make towards encouraging the learners who have already dropped out of school to re-register?

Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions. Your input is very important, and much appreciated.

SECTION A:

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION – SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY (SGB)

Please provide the following information by placing an X in the appropriate block.

1. Gender

a. Male	
b. Female	
c. Other	

2. Race

a. White	
b. Black	
c. Asian	
d. Coloured	

3. Age

a. Less than 25 years old	
b. 26 years – 35 years	
c. 36 years – 55 years	
d. Over 55 years of age	

SECTION B – SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY

4. When was your group elected/commissioned?

5. What is your responsibility as the SGB of this school?

6. What are the common challenges you normally discuss as a committee?

7. Would these challenges lead to learners dropping out?

8. As a committee what is it that you do to reduce the drop-out rate in your school?

9. As a committee what have you done to try and bring back learner/s who have dropped out of school?

10. What type of activities have you performed this year to bring about awareness of the drop-out rate in the school?

11. Were there any discussions that have taken place recently concerning the drop-out rate?

12. Do you receive any support from the educators or DOE?

13. What is your core vision and focus for this year in addressing the issue of the drop-out rate?

Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions. Your input is very important, and much appreciated.

<div align="center">

QUESTIONNAIRE

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SECTION A:

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION – PUPILS WHO HAVE DROPPED OUT

Please provide the following information by placing an X in the appropriate block.

1.   Gender

a. Male	
b. Female	
c. Other	

2. Race

a. White	
b. Black	
c. Asian	
d. Coloured	

3. Age

a. 14-15	
b. 16-17	
c. 18-19	
d. 20-21	
e. Above 21	

SECTION B – PUPILS WHO HAVE DROPPED OUT

4. What was your reason for dropping out of school?

5. What was the grade that you last attended?

6. **What were the reasons for you dropping out of school?**

7. **What challenges have you experienced since dropping out of school?**

8. **Are you planning to go back to school?**

9. **Do your parents encourage you to return to school?**

10. **Has anyone from the school, either the principal or teacher, visited you or encouraged you to return to school?**

11. **Do you have friends, or people you may know, who have dropped out the school, if yes how many?**

12. **How would you rate your performance whilst at school good, average or poor?**

Thank you for taking the time to answer the questions.

Your input is very important, and much appreciated.